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CRITICS VOTE ON BEST BOOKS OF 1938

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"This exodus of civilization from Central Europe may in the end prove to be a bigger force even than the second world war" . . .
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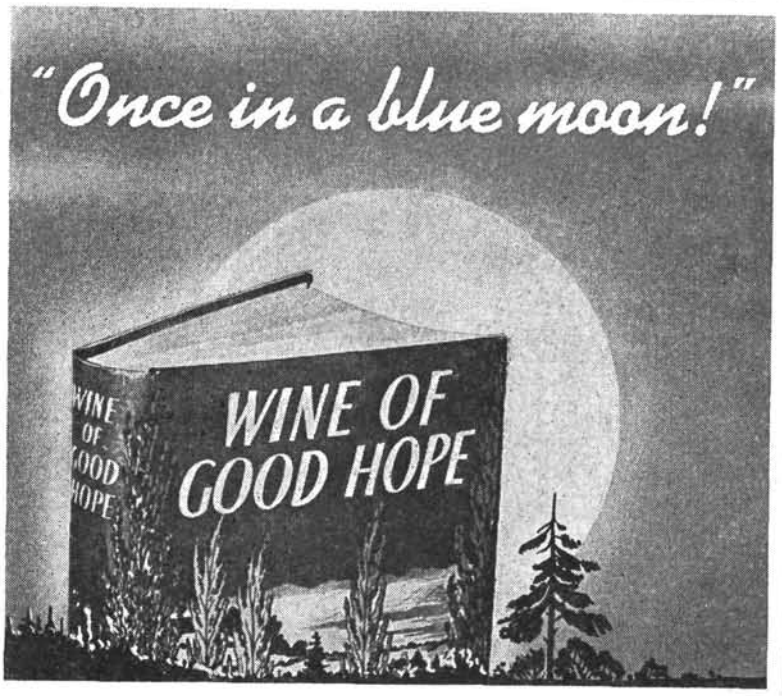

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A Culture in Migration

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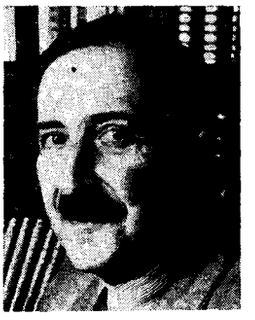

Stefan Zweig

ESCAPE TO LIFE. By Klaus and Erika Mann. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN GRIFFIN

WHEN Byzantium was sacked and its scholars were scattered over Europe, many perished and yet the refugee scholars in Italy largely caused the Renaissance, one of the greatest flowerings of art and science in the whole of human history. In these last six years the world has seen another large-scale migration of scientists, artists, and scholars; as Dorothy Thompson has said, "Practically everybody who stood for German culture is now a refugee." Those countries which receive the refugees from the Nazi terror may gain from them, as Italy gained from the refugee scholars of Byzantium, a renaissance. The present wave of refugees from Germany and Austria—now also from Bohemia and Spain—is clearly not as revolutionary as the migration of those Greek scholars from Byzantium; for Byzantium had withstood almost constant siege for a thousand years until it was the only place where the knowledge of ancient Greece survived. Yet the present migration, this exodus of civilization from Central Europe, may in the end prove to be a bigger force even than the second world war under whose shadow we live.

Erika and Klaus Mann, the eldest children of Thomas Mann, have written a really important book describing this migration—or rather the beginning of it. "Escape to Life" is not a statistical table of the number of refugees and their occupations, but it does give portrait after portrait of exceptionally gifted people. The portraits can be taken as good likenesses, to judge from those which are of people I myself know. And the total effect is overwhelming. The human riches that have already left that part of Europe which Hitler has barbarized are quite beyond belief, until you see them put down in black and white. And many readers of "Escape to Life" will at once think of greatly gifted exiles who have been left out of it: for instance, Artur Schnabel, perhaps the greatest musician of our time; and Lotte Reiniger, a kind of Disney working with silhouettes instead of drawings, whose "Adventures of Prince Achmed" is one of the masterpieces of the cinema.

"Escape to Life" raises some vital questions. First, is the still democratic world making full use of the gifted refugees? In many cases, yes, especially in America, where not only Einstein, Schoenberg, Benes, and Bruening can work in peace, but a whole host of talented men and women are busy learning English and starting afresh. The Manns give many instances. One is especially striking: the dramatic school Max Reinhardt is starting in Hollywood, because, he says, "Young people come here to the films after their first success on Broadway, which may have been purely personal, and not artistic at all," and then in Hollywood, "they are trained to fit some artificial types, for nobody has the time, and nobody will take the trouble, to investigate their special gifts and develop their special capacities." If Reinhardt can fill this gap, the film industry of America may become a great school of art.

And yet there is terrible waste going on. Again and again, in this book, one comes across a gifted German playwright who has written no play since his exile because there is no chance of his getting a play performed. The part of Europe from which Hitler has driven culture is the part that created perhaps the greatest musical tradition the world has ever known: are the German and Austrian musicians being fully used? Is there not perhaps some hope of remaking the Vienna opera in America—perhaps through a festival conducted by Bruno Walter and produced by Lothar Wallerstein? Or of reviving, before it wholly dies, the school of modern opera that was just coming into being at the Kroll Opera in Berlin, when Klemperer produced Krenek's "Life of Orestes"? "Escape to Life" raises many such practical questions.

Secondly, whenever refugees and unemployment come together, there is a danger of a wave of xenophobia, which is not only uncivilized but dangerous, since there are always interests glad to exploit it. Knowledge of the facts will often cure it. In England, a few years ago, just when the "international opera season" was going to open at Covent Garden, some British Members of Parliament signed a letter to the Press protesting against the employment of foreign singers and conductors. The answer they received was crushing: this "international opera season" was in fact giving jobs to far more British people than foreigners, and it was the employment of a few outstanding foreigners that alone was making it possible to employ a British orchestra, a British chorus, and a host of British stage-hands. Which shows that it is worth while to go into the facts about refugees.

And, finally, this book tells a great deal about what the best minds of Germany and Austria hope and believe of the future of freedom and of the chances of an after-Hitler Germany.

Though what they have to say is so important, Erika and Klaus Mann have said it in an unpretentious and personal way. And their book is full of fascinating stories. There is, for instance, an intimate portrait of their father, Thomas Mann. There is the story of how Erika Mann went back at great risk to their house in Germany, watched by the Nazis, to fetch the manuscript of her father's book, "Joseph in Egypt." There is Adolf Busch who, when the talk turned to politics, exclaimed, "It seems to me at such moments as if it were a sin to make music. . . . I'll be glad to let Chamberlain play my violin if he'll let me tell the truth to the English." And there are

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sadder stories, reminders of what it is that has driven these people into exile—and often it was voluntary exile. There is Alfred Flechtheim venturing back to Berlin in order that his wife might divorce him and so be free from Nazi persecution. There are tortures and suicides. And there is just enough about the underground movement in Germany to show that the cause of the true, civilized Germany has heroic martyrs.

Jonathan Griffin, a British journalist and author now in this country, has contributed to various leading English periodicals. He and his wife, who were in Prague throughout the September crisis, are the authors of a forthcoming book on Czechoslovakia, "Lost Liberty."

Seed of Tragedy

CHOSEN RACES. By Margaret Sothern. New York: Sheed and Ward. 1939. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH this novel is placed in contemporary Germany and deals directly with a problem created by Nazi race-theory, it has nevertheless a curiously detached and timeless atmosphere. Miss Sothern has focussed our attention unwaveringly upon her two lovers, Alfred and Frida, so that we are conscious first of their beings, their meetings, their thoughts, their short happiness, and more vaguely of the forces that destroy them. For Alfred is a Jew, and this fact, by its very existence, is the seed of tragedy exactly as was the fact that Romeo was a Montague. In this sense the bare statement is enough, and for the rest we have the personal, tortured love story. It was inevitable that the Nuremberg laws should produce this kind of tragedy; and the novel gains rather than suffers by its close adherence to the biographical form, rather than the sociological. Miss Sothern has written it very quietly, and has let her characters speak out with a real simplicity that is illuminating. Her book is no less denunciatory because it never leaves the level of reason.

Behind the Billboards

FIVE CITIES. By George R. Leighton. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE MILBURN

IT has been said that if a book is any good its story can be told in a single sentence. One picture in "Five Cities" tells what George R. Leighton's lyrical, scornful, vastly detailed study of American life is all about. On page 119 there is a photograph of a stoutly framed, neatly latticed billboard, foursheeted with a plump, fashionably-clad family smiling through the windshield of their shiny sedan, emblazoned with boxcar legends: "World's Highest Standard of Living — There's No Way Like the American Way." But beyond the billboard lies a rank weedpatch, a rubbish heap, a rotting shanty with a patched roof, and a brick backwall which bears a sodawater advertisement.

The things George Leighton turned up, poking around behind the bright billboards of five American cities, may seem at first blush to have only a marginal and disjointed relation to the whole history of our country. What has the unkept promise he found in Birmingham to do with the germ of hope he found still alive in Seattle? Has the museum piece he calls Louisville anything in common with the ramshackle ruin of Shenandoah, or the whoredom of Omaha? The subtitle of his book gives the key: "Five Cities—the Story of Their Youth and Old Age."

Observe that none of these cities is old, really, as the age of cities goes, even in the New World. Sprinkled through the book one finds their birthdates: Seattle, 1851; Omaha, 1854; Shenandoah, 1866; Birmingham, 1871; and scarcely a hundred years ago, Louisville a tiny river town. Consider the book's tender little preface describing the death of a woman last year. It is a simple parable which haunts the raucous passages to follow. This woman was dying, aged ninety-four. Within the brief span of one human life these cities were born, flourished, and grew old without ever having reached maturity. Whether they grew out of the coalfields of Pennsylvania, the iron mines of Alabama, the cornfed cattle of Nebraska, or the spruce forests of Washington, the same green rot was always there.

Mr. Leighton is too much a reporter—I can think of no one except Lincoln Steffens like him—to attempt any answers to the questions he raises. He is alternately charmed and revolted by the color and smell of his discoveries. (It is incredible that one man, single-handed in only four years and 15,000 miles of travel could find out so much, from the monthly budget of an eight-girl house in Omaha to the price of a convict lease on a Negro boy in Birmingham; from true talk on Seattle's Skidroad to banalities overheard in a Louisville hotel lobby.) He has got together a quivering mass of seemingly irrelevant material, and he has moulded it and breathed on it and spanked it until one hears the heartbeat of America—slightly fluttery, but life is there. His text is from the old woman's dying words:

> You have to work with what you've got and that's all there is to work with. You can't start out anywhere except from the place you come from. People can't do it any other way here in the United States, either. It's all plain, but we don't see it yet. The people in all these towns, they are frightened and sometimes murderous, just because in one way or another they're crying in the dark.

This is not to say that George Leighton is altogether bewildered by what he has to tell. At least the implications of his book are underlined. Anarchy, using the word in its popular antithetical sense, the vicious individualism on which these five cities were built, is done for. What can America make of the wreckage? This is the question "Five Cities" must leave in the mind of every reader who sincerely wants to make "the American Way" of the billboards a reality instead of a mockery.

"Five Cities," in my opinion, is among the few books to be chewed and digested, even though its strong meat is likely to bring heartburn to pampered stomachs. Meanwhile there are other American cities, the stories of which lie waiting to bulwark Mr. Leighton's thesis. I think offhand of Tulsa, Houston, Detroit, Denver, Great Falls. And I, for one, hope he will go on to them.

George Milburn is the author of "Oklahoma Town" and "Catalogue."

Seattle in 1878. From "Five Cities."

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Good and Happy

AUTOBIOGRAPHY WITH LETTERS. By William Lyon Phelps. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. $3.75.

Reviewed by CARL VAN DOREN

NOT all good men are happy, and by no means all happy men are good. But William Lyon Phelps has managed to be both, charmingly and infectiously. Although in the thousand pages of his memoirs he nowhere, of course, speaks of his goodness or even of his desire to have it, it shines through his narrative like a sun. During his early days at Yale, when he was an academic rebel in what he did as well as what he said, he had to endure a great deal from academic conservatives, with their familiar kind of jealousy which never admits that it is that. Yet Professor Phelps, so long so triumphant over them, tells the story without a touch of malice. He seems never to have yielded to the deadly sins of anger or envy or pride or avarice, any more than to gluttony or lust, and he has been as free of *tristitia* and *accidia* as any saint. He does not, apparently, cherish resentment against unkind or unjust critics, or remember bores bitterly. He had the courage to take unpopular positions before the war, when few teachers did, and to uphold popular opinions later, when few journalists did. In his seventy-fifth year he publishes his history without any pretension or self-consciousness, in what is without question his liveliest book and his book that will live longest.

About his happiness he is more explicit. "I have always been eaten up with ambition," he admits;

> I have had the longings described by Faust as he sat at his desk in the moonlight, and I worry about innumerable little things. I have never had a placid temperament. I have had two prolonged attacks of nervous prostration . . . and my religious faith remains in possession of the field only after prolonged civil war with my naturally skeptical mind. Yet I have certainly lived a happy life. . . . Perhaps the chief source of my happiness lies in my gift of appreciation. When I was a child, everything unusual excited me; now that I am old, everything usual has about the same effect.

But it is plain enough that he from the first had the will to be happy and kept it through all sorts of occasions that might have disorganized other men. Some balance in his nature led him early to divide his day into work in the forenoon, exercise in the afternoon, relaxation and amusement in the evening. If he ever had the instinct or the temptation to let one of these increase at the expense of another, he has resisted it. He learned to dance at fifty. He has been too happy to find time to grow old and cold.

Though now and then he speaks in his book of public affairs, he has been chiefly concerned with enjoying literature and teaching others to enjoy it. "Literature," he says, "is the immortal part of history." But he has never taken it on formal terms. For instance, he began reading Thomas Hardy more or less by accident, because the title of "A Pair of Blue Eyes" seemed agreeable. It began to look tragic as he read, but "I read on in a fool's paradise, thinking the author would exert his magic in the right way. . . . When I came to that last page, I threw the volume across the room; I vowed I would never read another novel by Thomas Hardy; I went to bed and stayed there one week. . . . Within a year I had read every one of his books." Professor Phelps wrote about Hardy, became friends with him, and urged him upon countless readers. So with J. M. Barrie, Professor Phelps's particular and

William Lyon Phelps at Seven Gables, Huron City, Michigan

perennial enthusiasm among modern British writers, and with Browning, Tennyson, Chaucer, and Shakespeare, and a bewildering array of poets, playwrights, novelists who have perhaps nothing in common except this ardent admirer.

It was never enough for him to enjoy them by himself. He must also communicate his pleasure, as soon and as far as possible. "In my mind, teaching is not merely a life-work, a profession, an occupation, a struggle: it is a passion. I love to teach. I love to teach as a painter loves to paint, as a musician loves to play, as a strong man rejoices to run a race." He taught students at Yale. He gave annual courses of lectures in half a dozen cities. He wrote his monthly column "As I Like It" for *Scribner's* for fourteen years. He has shared his literary enthusiasms with a large part of the reading world. Some day perhaps some scholar will make a list of the important writers who were wakened to a sense of literature by Professor Phelps. None of them may seem more unexpected on that list than Randolph Bourne, who thought he "owed all his later emancipation" to an "evening of cultural audacity" when he heard "the missionary of such vigorous and piquant doctrine" lecture on new classics about 1910.

Professor Phelps has never been a rigorous critic, and nobody will find much reasoned criticism in this book. There are almost no references to the outspoken and controversial writers who have made a new American literature within the past two decades. But within the field of Professor Phelps's enthusiasms and friendships he is too delightful to be strictly measured, and he includes many interesting (as well as some trivial) letters to him from such a variety of friends as few men have ever made.

Social Conflict in a Family Circle

THE MAIN STREAM. By Hilda Morris. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

HILDA MORRIS'S second book is a chronicle novel, following the flight of an American family away from a New York state farm and back to it through the crowded years of our century. The material is significant; the point of view honest and full of insight; the whole study of a changing way of life believable and appealing.

The central character is Flora Denwood, whose "gift for living" never deserts her even when she is hard-pressed by tragic circumstance. She can work a farm alone, teach school, play in a stock company, give an inexhaustible exuberance to any assignment that chance gives her. She loses a first love to a predatory sister and a second, the really illuminating experience of her life, through the young man's sudden, shocking death. When she marries at last, it is to comfort the middle age of an unsuccessful dabbler in letters. Flora is an unfailingly attractive figure.

While she sturdily walks this difficult but interesting road, a sister and a brother make more fantastic flights away from their original background. The final phase of the family history is concerned with the struggles between two sets of values dramatized in the persons of another generation of Denwoods.

There is a fine dignity to Miss Morris's treatment of her material. She has given intelligent attention to the drama of social conflict as it almost universally shows itself nowadays in the circle of a family. She expresses her sympathies with reserve and her protests without prejudice, enclosing the whole picture of a struggle in an atmosphere of shrewd, humorous compassion.

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Critics Vote on Best Books of 1938

"The Yearling," "Benjamin Franklin," "Founding of American Civilization," and "Selected Poems of Robinson Jeffers" Leading Choices in Nation-wide Poll

THE SATURDAY REVIEW presents herewith the results of its second annual poll of reviewers and literary editors throughout the country on the question: WHAT BOOKS DO YOU NOMINATE FOR THE PULITZER PRIZE AWARDS? The ballot we mailed out covers Fiction, Biography, History, and Poetry; but not Drama, since many of the plays produced late in the season, which are candidates for the Pulitzer Prize, have not yet appeared in book form.

There are 57 votes this year, from all parts of the United States, as against 47 a year ago. These nominations are of course unofficial, but they are none the less significant in recording the choices of America's professional readers — those whose job it is to read and report on the new books as they appear.

In both Fiction and Biography, the poll shows outstanding majority preferences. The first choice for "a distinguished novel, preferably dealing with American life, by an American author," is "The Yearling," by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Mrs. Rawlings's story of a boy in the Florida hammock country received 26 votes out of the total. "The Yearling," a Book-of-the-Month Club selection, was published in April, 1938; it has been widely popular ever since. The runner-up is "U. S. A." by John Dos Passos, with 5 votes. "U. S. A." is a trilogy containing "The Forty-Second Parallel," "1919," and "The Big Money."

The Fiction Vote

TITLE, AUTHOR, AND PUBLISHER	NO. OF VOTES
THE YEARLING by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings *(Scribners)*	26
U. S. A. by John Dos Passos *(Harcourt, Brace)*	5
ALL THIS, AND HEAVEN TOO by Rachel Field *(Macmillan)*	4
YOUNG MAN WITH A HORN by Dorothy Baker *(Houghton Mifflin)*	4
BLACK IS MY TRUE LOVE'S HAIR by Elizabeth Madox Roberts *(Viking)*	3
NO STAR IS LOST by James T. Farrell *(Vanguard)*	1
AND TELL OF TIME by Laura Krey *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1
OLD HAVEN by David Cornel DeJong *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1
THE FATHERS by Allen Tate *(Putnams)*	1
THE UNVANQUISHED by William Faulkner *(Random House)*	1
THE LIBERALS by John Hyde Preston *(John Day)*	1
THE GENERAL'S LADY by Esther Forbes *(Harcourt, Brace)*	1
"THE GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL" by Clyde Brion Davis *(Farrar & Rinehart)*	1
WHAT PEOPLE SAID by William L. White *(Viking)*	1
THREE HARBOURS by F. van Wyck Mason *(Lippincott)*	1
DYNASTY OF DEATH by Taylor Caldwell *(Scribners)*	1
BLOW FOR A LANDING by Ben Lucien Burman *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1

Carl Van Doren's "Benjamin Franklin" is the runaway leader for "the best American biography teaching patriotic and unselfish services to the people." Mr. Van Doren's book, published in October, was also a Book-of-the-Month Club choice; Crane Brinton in *The Saturday Review* called it "the Franklin book of our generation." "Benjamin Franklin" received 46 votes; no other book got more than 2.

The Biography Vote

TITLE, AUTHOR, AND PUBLISHER	NO. OF VOTES
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN by Carl Van Doren *(Viking)*	46
EAGLE FORGOTTEN by Harry Barnard *(Bobbs-Merrill)*	2
ELIHU ROOT by Philip C. Jessup *(Dodd, Mead)*	1
THE HIDDEN LINCOLN by Emanuel W. Hertz *(Viking)*	1
THE EDUCATION OF AN AMERICAN by Mark Sullivan *(Doubleday, Doran)*	1
FANNY KEMBLE by Margaret Armstrong *(Macmillan)*	1
ALONE by Richard E. Byrd *(Putnams)*	1
SAILOR ON HORSEBACK by Irving Stone *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1
GREEN WORLDS by Maurice Hindus *(Doubleday, Doran)*	1
A PURITAN IN BABYLON by William Allen White *(Macmillan)*	1

"For a distinguished book of the year in the history of the United States," the vote was much closer, and a larger number of titles was represented than in any other category. The choice fell on "The Founding of American Civilization: the Middle Colonies," by Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, by a margin of one vote.

The History Vote

TITLE, AUTHOR, AND PUBLISHER	NO. OF VOTES
THE FOUNDING OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION: THE MIDDLE COLONIES by Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker *(Scribners)*	5
THE STORY OF RECONSTRUCTION by Robert Selph Henry *(Bobbs-Merrill)*	4
A SOUTHERNER DISCOVERS THE SOUTH by Jonathan Daniels *(Macmillan)*	3
THE POLITICOS, 1865-1896 by Matthew Josephson *(Harcourt, Brace)*	2
THE RAMPARTS WE WATCH by George Fielding Eliot *(Reynal & Hitchcock)*	2
AMERICA GOES TO WAR by Charles C. Tansill *(Little Brown)*	2
VALLEY FORGE by Harry Emerson Wildes *(Macmillan)*	2
A HISTORY OF THE BUSINESS MAN by Miriam Beard *(Macmillan)*	2
AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES by Federal Writers' Project, W.P.A.	2
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS by Herbert Agar *(Houghton Mifflin)*	2
POWDER RIVER by Struthers Burt *(Farrar & Rinehart)*	2
MARCH TO QUEBEC compiled by Kenneth Roberts *(Doubleday, Doran)*	1
BEHOLD OUR LAND by Russell Lord *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1
AMERICAN REGIONALISM by Howard M. Odum and Harry Estill Moore *(Holt)*	1
THE PUBLIC PAPERS AND ADDRESSES OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT by Franklin D. Roosevelt *(Random House)*	1
THE COLONIAL PERIOD OF AMERICAN HISTORY, Vol. IV by Charles M. Andrews *(Yale)*	1
THE 168 DAYS by Joseph Alsop and Turner Catledge *(Doubleday, Doran)*	1
THE BIG FOUR by Oscar Lewis *(Knopf)*	1
FLIGHT INTO OBLIVION by A. J. Hanna *(Johnson Publ. Co.)*	1
ADVENTURES OF AMERICA compiled by John A. Kouwenhoven *(Harpers)*	1
DEMOCRACY IN THE MAKING by Hugh R. Fraser *(Bobbs-Merrill)*	1
THE GATEWAY TO HISTORY by Allan Nevins *(Appleton-Century)*	1
THE CULTURE OF CITIES by Lewis Mumford *(Harcourt, Brace)*	1
THE MONROE DOCTRINE 1867-1907 by Dexter Perkins *(Johns Hopkins)*	1
A PURITAN IN BABYLON by William Allen White *(Macmillan)*	1
HELL ON ICE by Edward Ellsberg *(Dodd, Mead)*	1

In poetry also a large number of titles are in the running, with "The Selected Poems of Robinson Jeffers" leading the runners-up by four votes. "The Selected Poems of Robinson Jeffers" contains this poet's most distinguished work, including the long narratives, "Tamar" and "Thurso's Landing."

The Poetry Vote

TITLE, AUTHOR, AND PUBLISHER	NO. OF VOTES
THE SELECTED POETRY OF ROBINSON JEFFERS *(Random House)*	8
AIR RAID by Archibald MacLeish *(Harcourt, Brace)*	4
LAND OF THE FREE by Archibald MacLeish *(Harcourt, Brace)*	4
COLLECTED POEMS by E. E. Cummings *(Harcourt, Brace)*	3
U. S. 1 by Muriel Rukeyser *(Covici-Friede)*	2
I'M A STRANGER HERE MYSELF by Ogden Nash *(Little Brown)*	2
COLLECTED POEMS by William Carlos Williams *(New Directions)*	2
THE RIVER by Pare Lorentz *(Stackpole)*	2
LEE IN THE MOUNTAINS by Donald Davidson *(Houghton Mifflin)*	2
CONCERNING THE YOUNG by Willard Maas *(Farrar & Rinehart)*	1
CARNIVAL by Frederic Prokosch *(Harpers)*	1
THE BRIGHT NORTH by Abbie Houston Evans *(Macmillan)*	1
MAINE BALLADS by Robert P. Tristram Coffin *(Macmillan)*	1
COLLECTED POEMS 1918-1938 by Genevieve Taggard *(Harpers)*	1
DEAD RECKONING by Kenneth Fearing *(Random House)*	1
AT MIDNIGHT ON THE 31ST OF MARCH by Josephine Y. Case *(Houghton Mifflin)*	1
COLLECTED POEMS by Mark Van Doren *(Henry Holt)*	1
STREAMS FROM THE SOURCE by Helene Mullins *(Caxton)*	1
M: ONE THOUSAND SONNETS by Merrill Moore *(Harcourt, Brace)*	1

The votes of the individual reviewers who participated in the poll are recorded on the following page. In a few cases votes were cast for books ineligible to receive Pulitzer Prizes, either because they were not published in 1938 or because their authors are foreign: these have been omitted. In cases of doubtful eligibility the votes are printed as received.

Last year the reviewers in the *Saturday Review* poll picked "Northwest Passage," by Kenneth Roberts, for fiction with 19 votes out of 46; "Andrew Jackson: Portrait of a President," by Marquis James, for biography with 23 votes; "The Old South," by William E. Dodd, for history with 7 votes; "Conversation at Midnight," by Edna St. Vincent Millay, for poetry with 14 votes. The actual Pulitzer Prize winners were "The Late George Apley," by J. P. Marquand, for fiction; "Andrew Jackson," by Marquis James, and "Pedlar's Progress," by Odell Shepard, for biography (divided prize); "The Road to Reunion," by Paul H. Buck, for history; "Cold Morning Sky," by Marya Zaturenska, for poetry. Readers of *The Saturday Review* will have an opportunity to compare the choices of this year's Critics' Poll with the Pulitzer Awards when the latter are announced early in May.

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How the Critics Voted

Name	Fiction Vote	Biography Vote	History Vote	Poetry Vote
CHARLES LEE, *Boston Herald*	And Tell of Time	Benjamin Franklin	A Southerner Discovers the South	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
A. L. S. WOOD, *Springfield Union*	All This, and Heaven Too	Benjamin Franklin	Choice ineligible	No vote
E. N. JENCKES, JR., *Springfield Republican*	No Vote	Benjamin Franklin	Founding of American Civilization	No vote
B. K. HART, *Providence Journal*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Choice ineligible	No vote
HENRY W. JACKSON, *New Haven Register*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Ramparts We Watch	No vote
LEWIS GANNETT, *N. Y. Herald Tribune*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Monroe Doctrine 1867-1907	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
RALPH THOMPSON, *N. Y. Times*	The Fathers	A Puritan in Babylon	America Goes to War	No vote
JAMES C. GREY, *N. Y. Sun*	The Yearling	Elihu Root	Valley Forge	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
ALICIA PATTERSON, *N. Y. Daily News*	The Unvanquished	Alone	Hell on Ice	No vote
CHARLES A. WAGNER, *N. Y. Daily Mirror*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Valley Forge	Collected Poems, Taggard
ROBERT BARLOW, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and other Paul Block newspapers*	Young Man with a Horn	Benjamin Franklin	The Politicos	Land of the Free
CHARLES POORE, *N. Y. Times*	U. S. A.	Benjamin Franklin	History of the Business Man	Air Raid
IRA WOLFERT, *North American Newspaper Alliance*	U. S. A.	The Hidden Lincoln	History of the Business Man	U. S. 1
HARRY HANSEN, *N. Y. World-Telegram*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	No vote
MICHAEL MARCH, *Brooklyn Citizen*	The Liberals	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
M. F. COLLINS, *United Press*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	A Puritan in Babylon	I'm a Stranger Here Myself
JOHN SELBY, *Associated Press*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	American Guide Series	No vote
MAX J. HERZBERG, *Newark Evening News*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Founding of American Civilization	Collected Poems, William Carlos Williams
SIDNEY WILLIAMS, *Philadelphia Inquirer*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	America Goes to War	Air Raid
LOUIS NICHOLAS, *Philadelphia Record*	Young Man with a Horn	Benjamin Franklin	Adventures of America	Dead Reckoning
MARK S. WATSON, *Sunday Sun, Baltimore*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Flight into Oblivion	At Midnight on the 31st of March
JOSEPH M. LALLEY, *Washington Post*	The General's Lady	Benjamin Franklin	The Big Four	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
MARY-CARTER ROBERTS, *Washington Star*	The Great American Novel	Benjamin Franklin	The 168 Days	No vote
DAVID H. APPEL, *Cleveland News*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Story of Reconstruction	U. S. 1
ELRICK B. DAVIS, *Cleveland Press*	The Yearling	Eagle Forgotten	Colonial Period of American History	Air Raid
CHRISTIN WALKER, *Columbus Dispatch*	All This, and Heaven Too	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	No vote
CLYDE BECK, *Detroit News*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Public Papers and Addresses of F. D. Roosevelt	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
HELEN C. BOWER, *Detroit Free Press*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	The River
KENNETH HORAN, *Chicago Journal of Commerce*	The Yearling	Education of an American	Choice ineligible	I'm a Stranger Here Myself
STERLING NORTH, *Chicago Daily News*	Black Is My True Love's Hair	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	Collected Poems, E. E. Cummings
FANNY BUTCHER, *Chicago Tribune*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Story of Reconstruction	Collected Poems, William Carlos Williams
WALTER WHITWORTH, *Indianapolis News*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	American Regionalism	Concerning the Young
JAMES GRAY, *St. Paul Dispatch*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	Collected Poems, Mark Van Doren
DALE WILSON, *Milwaukee Journal*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Founding of American Civilization	Air Raid
GEORGE GRIMES, *Omaha World-Herald*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Behold Our Land	No vote
ROSAMOND MILNER, *Louisville Courier-Journal*	Black Is My True Love's Hair	Benjamin Franklin	The Pursuit of Happiness	No vote
MARY STAHLMAN DOUGLAS, *Nashville Banner*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Story of Reconstruction	Lee in the Mountains
KENNETH C. KAUFMAN, *Daily Oklahoman*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	Powder River	Lee in the Mountains
W. M. REDDIG, *Kansas City Star*	What People Said	Benjamin Franklin	The Politicos	No vote
GILBERT E. GOVAN, *Chattanooga Times*	The Yearling	Eagle Forgotten	Founding of American Civilization	Selected Poetry, Jeffers
JAY LEWIS, *Norfolk Ledger-Dispatch*	Three Harbours	Benjamin Franklin	March to Quebec	No vote
ANGUS PERKERSON, *Atlanta Journal*	The Yearling	Fanny Kemble	A Southerner Discovers the South	Land of the Free
JANE JUDGE, *Savannah Morning News*	Blow for a Landing	Benjamin Franklin	Powder River	Maine Ballads
JOSEPH F. MARRON, *Jacksonville Times-Union*	Black Is My True Love's Hair	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	The Carnival
ALBERT GOLDSTEIN, *New Orleans Times-Picayune*	Young Man with a Horn	Green Worlds	A Southerner Discovers the South	No vote
JOHN H. McGINNIS, *Dallas News*	U. S. A.	Benjamin Franklin	The Culture of Cities	Land of the Free
HAROLD D. CAREW, *Pasadena Star-News*	All This, and Heaven Too	Benjamin Franklin	The Gateway to History	No vote
PAUL JORDAN-SMITH, *Los Angeles Times*	Dynasty of Death	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	M: One Thousand Sonnets
LUTHER MEYER, *San Francisco Call-Bulletin*	No vote	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	Land of the Free
ELEANOR T. MacMILLAN, *Oregon Journal*	All This, and Heaven Too	Benjamin Franklin	The Ramparts We Watch	Streams from the Source
LAWRENCE LEE, *Virginia Quarterly*	Old Haven	Benjamin Franklin	Democracy in the Making	The River
JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, *Harper's Magazine*	No Star Is Lost	Sailor on Horseback	The Pursuit of Happiness	Collected Poems, E. E. Cummings
MALCOLM COWLEY, *The New Republic*	U. S. A.	Benjamin Franklin	American Guide Series	Collected Poems, E. E. Cummings
CLIFTON FADIMAN, *The New Yorker*	Young Man with a Horn	Benjamin Franklin	No vote	No vote
LOUISE BOGAN, *The New Yorker*	No Vote	No Vote	No vote	The Bright North
BURTON RASCOE, *Newsweek*	The Yearling	Benjamin Franklin	The Story of Reconstruction	Choice ineligible
EDITORIAL STAFF, *The Saturday Review*	U. S. A.	Benjamin Franklin	Founding of American Civilization	Selected Poetry, Jeffers

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Willard Huntington Wright

IN the fall of 1913, at the Florestan Club in Baltimore, H. L. Mencken introduced me to the Florestan cocktail and to two elegant young men from New York, George Jean Nathan and Willard Huntington Wright. I knew that Mencken was the literary critic of *The Smart Set,* and he explained that his friends were respectively the dramatic critic and the editor. They were a most engaging trio for a new arrival in America to meet, who was by way of being a writer himself. Mencken was bucolic and Baltimorean, full of good humor and gusto, Nathan was urbanely urban-New York, Wright was suavely and sardonically cosmopolitan. Born in Virginia, he announced himself a Californian, Los Angeles and New York were his stamping grounds, and he looked as if he had just left the Café de la Paix—not a trace of the Dôme or the Deux Magots, or the Closerie des Lilas. A Right Bank American, if ever there was one.

I had vague recollections of the English edition of *The Smart Set,* but had never thought of it as anything more than a magazine of light reading. Mencken had already undermined that conception of it, so I was prepared to hear (and was convinced that night) that *The Smart Set* was the only vital publication in the United States. And here was the Editor. He was a striking figure. Having been already horrified by the spectacle of what seemed like 130,000,000 clean-shaven faces, I appreciated his moustache of Hohenzollern cut and proportions. When he incarnated himself as S. S. Van Dine, according to the obituary reporters, he had dark hair. My recollection is that then his hair was very light brown and the general impression was one of blondness. When he grew a beard, it was long, blond, and parted in the middle.

Wright vastly impressed me that night, in his twenty-fifth year. He was (or had been) literary editor of the *Los Angeles Times* and *Town Topics,* and was the dramatic critic of the latter, in addition to editing *The Smart Set.* He had a book of verse to his credit, and that night at the Florestan Club the trio were discussing the book known as "Europe after 8.15," which was the result of a trip they had made to Europe together to gather material and impressions for their beloved magazine, in the current issue of which Wright's article on Vienna had just appeared. To a newcomer, of course, Wright's interest in European literary goings-on seemed very natural—where else was there any literature, apart from a few names stoutly defended by Mencken, Nathan, and Wright: Dreiser, Frank Norris, David Graham Phillips, Robert Herrick? Henry James and Edith Wharton, in those days, were not classified as specifically American.

It was not until I came to know him intimately that I discovered that George Moore, D. H. Lawrence, Wedekind, Strindberg, Schnitzler, James Joyce, and James Stephens got their first hearing as short story writers through the editorial perspicacity of Willard Huntington Wright. He also introduced his greenhorn friend to American names hitherto unknown to me and apparently neglected in their own country: John Reed, Barry Benefield, George Bronson-Howard, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Paul Scott Mowrer, John Hall Wheelock, Joyce Kilmer, and Sara Teasdale. From 1912 to 1914 he was obviously determined to give this country the equivalent of Ford Madox Ford's *English Review,* with Continental overtones. A dynamic person, Willard Huntington Wright.

He was the most interesting and attractive *unlikable* man I have ever known. He made no appeal to the affections—save those of certain members of the opposite sex. His appeal was wholly cerebral. I used to come up from Baltimore, go straight to his apartment in Lexington Avenue, and remain closeted with him alone for a day and a night of solid conversation. He was a brilliant talker and a good listener, as only people who really understand the art of conversation are. His agile mind never seemed to tire; he endlessly discussed and projected books which he or I should write. The first edition of "The Man of Promise" characteristically announces two books as forthcoming, which never appeared. Not that he was unproductive—his record is there to prove the contrary—but he had to live, and plans are a luxury when there is no financial anchor astern. It was a strain under which he broke, to emerge as S. S. Van Dine.

As early as 1915 he was composing a personality for himself, and that personality finally became Philo Vance. It is evident in his constant changes of physical appearance: the Kaiser Wilhelm moustache, the Adolphe Menjou moustache, the Van Dyke beard, and finally the truculent beard of S. S. Van Dine. His serious works were the expression of his genuine interests, but he always maintained that he could do anything. I remember when he proved that he could do the work of a housewife in a tenth of the time wasted by women. Either just before or just after he wrote that excellent and very characteristic novel, "The Man of Promise," which was a commercial failure, he wrote another, under a pseudonym which I have forgotten, which was so bad, such piffle, that he defied the fool public not to like it! He could never understand that a certain sincerity must exist even in writers of the cheapest fictional merchandise. This book, which I could not read and threw away, failed also. But he was not dismayed. He triumphantly proved his theory when he set himself, in the most adverse of circumstances, to project his own personality (as composed artificially) into fiction and conceal his identity behind a pseudonym.

"I had spent fifteen years building up a cultural reputation for myself in American letters"—I can hear his voice and see the twist of contempt on his thin lips—"I was the author of nine serious books into which I put the fruits of all my research and study and labor. And up to the age of thirty-seven I had barely succeeded in keeping my ledger balanced." Now I see the contemptuous glitter in his eyes: "Each one of my Philo Vance stories has made more money than all my nine serious books put together. My literary earnings for any six months during the past two and a half years have been more than my entire literary earnings for the previous fifteen years. I don't know why these things should be."

Willard Huntington Wright knew very well why such things should be. Anyone can find out why by reading those "nine serious books," all pioneering work of their kind, never making any concessions to popularity. But they are still remembered by those who read them, as his brilliant literary page in the *New York Evening Mail* reminds one how the literary times have changed, though the sheets as I turn them are crumbling into dust. It was Wright's peculiar habit to sleep flat on his back and lie motionless in that position all night. It was thus I saw him in my mind's eye, when I read that he had died suddenly of coronary thrombosis at the age of fifty-one. A man of more promises than one.

ERNEST BOYD.

Mask

BY STEPHEN SPENDER

THE face of the landscape is a mask
Of bone and iron lines where time
Has ploughed its character.
I look and look to read a sign,
Through errors of light and eyes of water
Beneath the land's will, of a fear
And the memory of a struggle,
As man behind his mask still wears a
child.

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Letters to the Editor: *The Point of "Wickford Point"*

Brilliant Brills

SIR:—I have been hugely interested in the chit-chat going the rounds about "Wickford Point." Have read several reviews of the book (also read the book). I wonder sometimes if reviewers don't read a book while munching their doughnuts and coffee in the morning—their reviews sound like it. Not a single review I've read so far hits the spot. "Wickford Point" was a nasty nest of neurotics (alliteration accidental)—and if I can read between the lines, the author is showing up the trend of shiftless, trifling nobodies, who happen to fall heir to a fortune and then proceed to talk ancestry and go "arty." Bella Brill was a modern gold digger, who couldn't go near a man unless she asked him either for a cigarette or a ten-dollar bill (in the event he didn't have the latter, she always got the former). Mary had an inferiority complex; some of the men had a Narcissin complex, and Aunt Clothilde reminds me of those frilly old ladies whom Billie Burke is representing these days. For every character in the book one can find a prototype in real life. They live off a fortune which was built up by a hard-working old grandfather, who unfortunately handed down to his spineless, watery-blooded kin, enough mazuma to enable them to shun work as if it were the plague.

If I read the handwriting on the wall at "Wickford Point" correctly, it is comparable to that written on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, announcing the loss of a kingdom. What if the book is long-winded, so's the Bible.

GENE BOARDMAN HOOVER.

Kansas City, Mo.

Slicks and Books

SIR:—I submit another document in the case of "Wickford Point," the serial, versus "Wickford Point," the book. It is the late Keith Preston's opinion of the editorial policy of the *Saturday Evening Post*, recorded eighteen years ago in a poem called "Safety First."

That serial I'm reading had me scared, it did!
The hero started speeding and looked sure to skid;
The heroine seemed slipping (and she did, almost)
But they can't get very naughty in the *Sat. Eve. Post.*

Our hero turned the corner without spill or shock;
The gal is no forlorner, thanks to good Saint Bok!
So never never worry if they start to coast
For they never hit the bottom in the *Sat. Eve. Post.*

It may look like a joy ride when the couple starts,
But our author takes the safe side in the slippy parts.
The ride will not be tippy though they tope a tub
For the ale is never nippy at the Curtis Pub.

ROSEMARY FARR.

New York City

"Yes, this is the 'Beauty Hints' editor."

"Tryst"

SIR:—Would it be asking too much to suggest that R. S. *read* "Tryst," so amazingly reviewed by him or her in the *S.R.L.* for March 18? It might interest him or her to discover that the frequently mentioned photograph on Hilary Shenstone's dresser was not of himself but of his fiancée, Alice—*my* error, not his fiancée but the girl with whom he had once been in love. Also, Sabrina discovers his name *not* from the tailor's labels in his suits, but written on a page in one of his beloved volumes of Kipling. Aside from those two surprising misstatements, the review gives one an adequate if uninspiring idea of the novel.

ANN EDGAR LUCAS.

New York City.

SIR:—In reviewing Elswyth Thane's "Tryst" (March 18) I erroneously stated that the heroine discovered the hero's name from the tailor's label in his suit. This discovery was actually made from the flyleaf of the hero's copy of Kipling's "Puck of Pook's Hill." In the same review I also stated that the hero's photograph stood on the dresser whereas actually it was the photograph of a former girl friend. These errors, while admittedly unfortunate, did not, I believe, seriously affect my judgment of the novel, which is still a good one.

ROBERT STRUNSKY.

New York City.

Cassandra

SIR:—A word of remonstrance to Mr. David H. Popper who reviewed "Europe on the Eve: The Crises of Diplomacy" by Frederick L. Schuman in your issue of March eighteenth. In his closing sentence, Mr. Popper remarks that "History is replete with the pronouncements of Cassandras whose grim forebodings never came true."

The classical Cassandra, I believe, was endowed with the gift of *true* prophecy but cursed by the misfortune of never being believed. This fact makes Mr. Popper's statement grimmer, more foreboding, and considerably more significant.

JANE SUYDAM OFFUTT LONG.

Lexington, Ky.

Gissing as a Prophet

SIR:—Quercus's remark about the poets and philosophers calling the turn beforehand makes one wonder what George Gissing, who hated democracy and science, would say of European conditions today. Gissing wrote in "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft" (1902):

> Democracy is full of menace to all the finer hopes of civilization, and the revival, in not unnatural companionship with it, of monarchic power based on militarism, makes the prospect dubious enough. There has but to arise some Lord of Slaughter, and the nations will be tearing at each other's throats. Let England be imperilled, and Englishmen will fight; in such extremity there is no choice. But what a dreary change must come upon our islanders if, without instant danger, they bend beneath the curst of universal soldiering! . . .
>
> A lettered German, speaking to me once of his year of military service, told me that, had it lasted but a month or two longer, he must have sought release in suicide. . . . At school we used to be "drilled" in the playground once a week; I have but to think of it, even after forty years, and there comes back upon me that tremor of passionate misery which, at the time, often made me ill. . . . The loss of individuality seemed to me sheer disgrace. . . .

BROTHER C. PHILIP, F.S.C.

Manhattan College,
New York City.

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Measuring Mass Opinion

PUBLIC OPINION. By William Albig. New York: McGraw-Hill Co. 1939. $4.

Reviewed by GEORGE GALLUP

WILLIAM ALBIG, associate professor of sociology at the University of Illinois, has given us a scholarly and detailed study of public opinion from the sociologist's point of view. His approach is that of an academic concerned with describing the nature and theory of opinion, and little attempt is made to relate opinion to politics and contemporary social trends. The book takes a sharply different path from that taken by Walter Lippmann in his work on public opinion published in 1922. While Lippmann's book was a sort of broad essay describing the general landscape of opinion, Albig's is a gun-and-camera expedition through the underbrush, with minute examination of detail. Heavily studded with footnotes and references, his volume discusses communication, legends and myths, violence and public opinion, psychological processes and opinion, censorship, the radio, newspapers and cinema, propaganda, etc.

Written in a scholarly style, the discussions embrace a wealth of factual material. But many chapters seem inconclusive, as if the author were content simply to describe and define, while leaving it to the reader to determine the significance of what has been said. Decidedly worth reading are the two chapters on propaganda—a sane and realistic study of an opinion-forming process which the author considers "inevitable in modern society." He concludes that although propaganda is "pervasive and will be persistent," it is not necessarily a detriment to intelligent popular decisions.

Students of public opinion are likely to find one shortcoming in the book. That is the author's apparent lack of awareness of the new materials and techniques for opinion measurement that have been developed in the last four or five years. His chapter on measurement deals at considerable length with laboratory and classroom experiments in attitude scales, true-and-false tests, and other techniques which, while they often prove interesting, have a limited use in measuring mass opinion. In the last four years, and particularly in the last two, the hundreds of cross-section surveys by the American Institute of Public Opinion, *Fortune*, and a number of others have provided a wealth of new data for the student of public opinion. They have shed light on opinion changes and trends, the influence of age and economic factors on opinion, methods of measurement, etc. The shortcomings of the old-fashioned straw poll, pointed out by Dr. Claude Robinson seven years ago in "Straw Votes," have been largely eliminated by more modern scientific methods. But Professor Albig is content to base his criticism of sampling pretty largely on the *Literary Digest's* efforts, whereas *Digest* techniques have long since been antiquated. His analysis of the 1936 election surveys suffers from the fact that he used semi-final results of at least three surveys examined instead of final results, so that his comparisons with actual election figures are inaccurate. And he has made no attempt to appraise the accuracy of opinion surveys since 1936.

The book also contains a number of generalities which are hard to square with known facts. The author writes that the common man as a member of large publics "persistently follows the personal leader while losing sight of the issue." But does he? Opinion surveys show that in 1937 President Roosevelt, an immensely popular figure at the time, was utterly unable to persuade the majority of voters to accept his plan for changing the Supreme Court. In another chapter Professor Albig writes that "apparently a few minutes of oral propaganda produces large and measurable results." But President Roosevelt's two eloquent broadcasts attacking the Court two years ago produced no large and measurable change of opinion toward that tribunal.

Such criticisms of Professor Albig's work are, however, criticisms of detail only. The book is a valuable source for students interested in the sociological aspects of public opinion. It provides background and orientation for the study of a subject rapidly growing in importance in modern society.

Dr. Gallup is the director of the American Institute of Public Opinion.

Education of a Reporter

ALL IN THE DAY'S WORK. By Ida M. Tarbell. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET WALLACE

IDA TARBELL told reporters on her eightieth birthday that her autobiography was going to be a shop-talk book. That is what it is. And that is what Miss Tarbell—who was already an experienced journalist when the Haymarket Riot in Chicago was hot news—was shrewd enough to realize her readers would want from her. The counsels of our elders may be somewhat out of fashion these days. But I have an idea that many persons will turn to these pages curious to hear a judgment upon our own times pronounced by a trained observer who has seen at close range so many recurrent cycles of economic change.

Alfred Cheney Johnston
Ida M. Tarbell

During the course of a life longer and fuller than most, Ida Tarbell has been first and last an observer, a student on the trail of facts. From the moment when she learned, with considerable shock, that the world probably was not created in six days, she resolved to investigate before adopting any belief again. The accuracy of natural science was her touchstone. When she left home in 1876 to enter Allegheny College, a solitary girl in a class of forty young men, she intended to become a microscopist. It took several years—and they were years of wanton speculation and over-building, of economic collapse and bloody labor disputes—to persuade her that there was a science of society quite as absorbing as the science of botany.

Informed men, then as now, saw the world apparently going mad and labored to analyze causes and discover remedies. It was curiosity concerning the nature of revolution which led Ida Tarbell to France and her study of Madame Roland. This research, almost by accident, settled her in the career which has resulted in her notable investigation of the Standard Oil Company, her biography of Lincoln, her studies of such industrial leaders as Judge Gary and Owen D. Young. A career which, as set forth here, compels the most sincere admiration.

Miss Tarbell tells her own story with dignity and simplicity. "All in the Day's Work" is comparatively impersonal—partly because Miss Tarbell has not assumed that all the world is interested in her private concerns, partly because her life has been too full of important matters to have left much room for trivialities. If her honesty ever has been called into question, and she assures us it has, this record is a satisfactory answer to the charge.

Her findings concerning the Standard Oil Company were, in effect, hostile and gave aid and comfort to the Standard's political opponents. When she pronounced Judge Gary a great industrial statesman, there were many to accuse her of turning coat and selling out to big business. Miss Tarbell never has sold out to anything—not even to the temptation to invent easy formulas for the cure of our common ills. She still does not believe, after participating in half a century of social experiment, that we can legislate ourselves into peace and prosperity.

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Antipodal Yankees

HOLMES OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE. By M. A. DeWolfe Howe. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. $2.50.

ORESTES A. BROWNSON: A PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by ODELL SHEPARD

ASIDE from the accident of simultaneous publication, there would at first seem to be no excuse for an attempt to discuss these two books in a single article. Orestes Brownson and Dr. Holmes had about as much in common as a thunder-cloud and the glint of dancing water. Brownson was a passionate reformer convinced that his world was out of joint, but the Autocrat never doubted that he lived at the very "hub" of the best of all possible worlds. And yet for that very reason the two men set each other off. The brisk serenity and the almost unqualified good fortune of Holmes are the more apparent when brought into contrast with the tempestuous failure of Brownson's life. And yet this Orestes Brownson, as we are slowly finding out, was a man of genius, while Holmes, all grace and glitter, finding his rhymes and epigrams so readily because he drew them up from so shallow a cistern, was a charming compound of many talents. As one reads the two present studies in close succession all this becomes even clearer than it has been. In such a reading, too, one is again reminded that the word "Yankee" covers a rich and various world, full of the strangest divergencies of character, temperament, and opinion.

Portrait by Thomas Hicks
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Mr. Howe's book is written in the tone of quiet authority to be expected of a man who has long been at home in the Autocrat's time and place. Probably no one is better equipped than he to bring before us the "perpetual undergraduate" of Harvard, the early *Atlantic Monthly*, the Saturday Club, or the neighbor of Mrs. James T. Fields. Without even trying, one would say, to turn up new material or to suggest a novel interpretation, Mr. Howe has written a pleasant account of Holmes which contains few surprises. Among the many good things in it perhaps the most welcome are the eight admirably chosen photographs—one of them representing a portrait of Holmes painted by Thomas Hicks in 1858 and two others showing Oliver Wendell Holmes the Younger in his boyhood and early youth.

Orestes A. Brownson about 1843

This book is a luxury and a delight, not only in its contents but in the beautiful format exactly designed for it by the publishers. The book about Brownson, written by the son of Professor Schlesinger of Harvard, is more in the nature of a necessity. At any time during the last forty years it must have been apparent to serious students of New England life and letters that there has been something almost absurd in our neglect of Orestes Brownson. Glancing into the twenty volumes of his "Works," collected half a century ago by his son, one has often been impressed anew by the patent fact that this man wrote a remarkably virile, packed, and serried style. Turning to his *Quarterly Review*, one has been caught again and again in the grip of a powerful mind. Stumbling, perhaps, upon his essay on "The Laboring Classes," one has seen the most liberal thinking of our own day anticipated there on page after page. And then, going a little farther, one may have discovered that the intellectual and spiritual history of Brownson presented, in its great range and numerous tergiversations, a fascinating topic for the biographer.

Mr. Schlesinger writes as though in haste to fill this obvious gap in our knowledge of the New England past. In saying this one does not mean that his work has been hasty. It is merely incomplete. Everything that enthusiastic and highly trained industry can do to bring Brownson back into the world of the living Mr. Schlesinger has done. His account of the social, political, financial, and theological struggles of a century ago is remarkably well informed and still more remarkably thoughtful. In the cogent and always significant marshaling of fact that his book everywhere shows one cannot fail to recognize the hand of a young master. He loads every rift with lore. And always he prefers to let his facts speak for him. His book shows an almost ascetic avoidance of comment, of humor, of charm, and of all those graces in which Mr. Howe's study of Holmes is rich. Highly as one respects it, therefore, one must say that this account of Orestes Brownson is somewhat harsh, crude, and feverish. But then, one may well remember, so was the man himself. It is also powerful. So was he. It moves everywhere at top speed. So did he.

Odell Shepard, of the English department of Trinity College, is the author of "Pedlar's Progress: a Life of Bronson Alcott," a Pulitzer Prize winner in biography. He is also the editor of Bronson Alcott's Journals.

Diseased Landscape

AMERICAN EARTH—THE BIOGRAPHY OF A NATION. By Carleton Beals. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by PAUL B. SEARS

IN many ways this is one of the blackest books I ever read. It is a social chronicle, with no varnish, which parallels and explains the somber tragedy so depressing to those of us whose profession it is to examine and diagnose the landscape. That landscape in what we call the United States is diseased—mortally so unless we set ourselves to work at once. And since man is inescapably a part of the landscape he occupies, the healing must be a far more profound and serious matter than the kind of ingenious scientific trouble-shooting to which we are accustomed in industry. It is one thing to have an automobile streamlined, radio reception improved, a dye invented, or a great bridge built. It is a very different thing to reshape the attitude and way of life of a nation accustomed from the first, with a few notable exceptions, to despise the earth while raping it.

One is obliged, from the evidence presented, to conclude that America, born of the conflict between feudalism and city mercantilism, growing up in an industrial age manipulated by financialism, has absorbed many of the worst features of all. This, be it said, is not a matter of moral judgment, except as such judgment emerges from an examination of the physical consequences. The point is, it has not worked and is not working now, except in a destructive sense.

In a way, the theme of the book is one we all know by heart, without accepting it in our hearts. It is the story of American settlement by a Europe trying at once to escape from exploitation and to transplant exploitation. Largely, one of two things happened. The exploiters either overtook the refugees; or the latter themselves, once settled, took to practising the only cultural pattern they understood—that of which they had been the victims. Nowhere is the situation more pointedly expressed than in Georgia, founded as a benevolent enterprise but now "The Swan Song of Utopia." "In no place," we are told, "has the American earth been more abused than in Georgia"; . . . "the average rural citizen [there] is such a miserable, poverty-stricken, and ignorant individual that the one attribute of superiority . . . is his right to hate the Negro." "Crime has increased everywhere . . . genuine wealth is not increasing."

Following the historical section of the book is a lot of ugly but veracious reading. In fact, it is ugly because veracious—Beals's own field studies among migrant workers and share-croppers. If these things were happening to a population group as resourceful as some of those who

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are in trouble abroad, the finger of scorn we are pointing across the Atlantic might wobble a bit.

There is no flattery in this book for any section of us. But perhaps the conservatives will find balm for their bruises in seeing how the New Deal gets kicked around. The religious in their turn may have some reward for the way they are kicked about by the author's indictment of those who decline moral responsibility and see nothing of meaning or continuity in the life of a nation on its land.

Paul B. Sears is the author of "Deserts on the March."

Health Insurance

AMERICAN MEDICINE MOBILIZES. By James Rorty. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH, M.D.

MR. RORTY has written a spirited and challenging, if one-sided, account of the past, present, and possible future of the contest for compulsory health insurance between the Federal Administration and "organized medicine," in which the whipping-boy of the drama is the much publicized Dr. Morris Fishbein and his cohorts. To the author "the struggle to democratize the right to health [by which he means the enforcement of insurance] . . . has become a crucial test of the vitality of our democratic institutions." His is the enthusiasm and the emotion of the newly converted, and it is the projection of his excitement that makes his book far livelier reading than most social treatises, and that also tends to obscure the weakness of some of his arguments.

Mobilization Day is placed by Mr. Rorty as on July 18, 1938, with the opening of the National Health Conference called at Washington by the Administration to consider its proposed health program. The story of this so carefully staged conference, its history, and its reception by unprepared and affrighted doctors, comprise the first section of the three that make up the book. The second deals largely with the political and business activities of the American Medical Association, and subjects to attack Dr. Fishbein and his *Journal*. In the third, the types of socialized medicine now in practice both at home and abroad, are briefly reviewed to point up the author's contention that compulsory health insurance, and that alone, will brilliantly meet the nation's health problem. Official documents and statistical data are offered in the appendix to clinch the argument.

It is not the province of a reviewer to pass judgment on a writer's convictions. It is his province, however, to inquire what the author is trying to do and whether his argument is presented logically and fairly. That "American Medicine Mobilizes" is propaganda for compulsory health insurance is not necessarily against it. But the honest propagandist must recognize a special obligation to play fair with his public in the use and interpretation of the "facts" on which he builds. Half-truths won't do. And statistics, like X-ray plates, are of value only when they are compiled and interpreted by those trained for the purpose. When, for example, Mr. Rorty "proves" with quoted figures that thirty per cent of our indigent population do not receive medical care, implying that this is because they can't purchase it, we have the right to know that no less a health authority than Dr. Haven Emerson has sharply challenged the careless methods employed by the investigators for the quoted survey, and also that the same survey showed that even among those who have an income of three thousand dollars or more, only seventeen per cent seek a doctor when they are ill. Again, when Mr. Rorty reminds us of the tremendous costs to tax-payers of the nation's preventable deaths and diseases,

Diplomats of the Pre-War Era

MISS BAX OF THE EMBASSY. By Emily Bax. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by CONINGSBY DAWSON

THE title of this book suggests a mystery novel—which it isn't. It is a mystery-autobiography. The fare it provides consists of intimate glimpses of a vanished world—its political intrigues, its social climbers, its makers and breakers. The scene is the American Embassy in London. The period is 1902 to 1911, when Joseph H. Choate, Whitelaw Reid, and Walter H. Page were successively ambassadors.

To write an autobiography pleasantly requires tolerance, humor, and a gift for tenderness. Miss Bax is richly possessed of these three qualities. She loves the past which she describes. Because of this she makes it live again with almost a nostalgic yearning, so that scenes which were once real to her become real to us.

And who was Miss Bax? At the start of her story she was a girl short of twenty, who had taught herself to typewrite in an age when it was unladylike for refined young females to earn their own livelihoods. The American Embassy in London engaged her services; and there she stayed for twelve years, informing all the comers and goers, including the newly appointed ambassadors, in regard to their duties. Walter H. Page sums up her *Who's Who* in a letter of introduction: "She is English and her status is a stenographer. But she has served so long and has learned so much about the work that she is really a sort of secretary of the Embassy. Anyone else might go or might die and not be missed; but if she were to go the Embassy would be out of gear."

High praise. But not as high as Miss Bax deserves. For this little lady who demurely took down stupid letters from second and third secretaries, was actually a female Boswell. The American Embassy during the twelve spacious years preceding the World War, was her Johnson.

This book is gossipy. It chatters on for pages. Court procedure and the ladies with undesirable pasts who wished to be presented; the strict morality which was an uncharitable pretense amounting to hypocrisy—Theodore Roosevelt at Edward VII's funeral, having to drive in a carriage when he would really have liked to have ridden a horse, in his Rough Rider's uniform, which was the only uniform he possessed.

The best portions of the book for me deal with Anglo-American relationships and the pages, unsurpassed in vividness, which picture the suspense which led up to the outbreak of the World War.

Miss Bax, without meaning to achieve anything historic, has done a very fine job. She talks too long about things of merely passing interest, but there are moments in her book which should make it a part of the permanent records.

Miss Bax and Irwin Laughlin at the American Embassy in London, 1912

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of the added millions spent each year for patent medicines, and then states that billions thus wasted will be saved if we enforce insurance, should he ignore the almost certainly greater costs of a national medical bureaucracy, with its inevitable thousands of administrators, supervisors, and clerks? And will he tell us please, why if health insurance destroys the magic appeal of patent medicines, it has not done so in Great Britain? His arraignment of the American Medical Association's policy of business appeasement may be justified in part, but a comparison of the American *Journal's* advertising pages with those of Britain's most dignified medical publications will at least indicate that here as elsewhere Mr. Rorty tends to oversimplify the problem in the interests of his cause.

Mr. Rorty sees the medical profession as lining up in two groups—the obstructive, business-minded doctors, "organized medicine," and the increasingly independent progressives who are fighting for health insurance. But he has failed to give adequate attention to those who make up the vast majority of the nation's physicians. These, even though they belong to their county societies, refuse to accept any of Mr. Rorty's labels. There are thousands of them—men and women grimly aware of diminishing incomes, yet going on as they always have, treating to the best of their ability the rich and poor who come to them. They have the best of reasons for knowing how times have changed, and they are eager to do something about it. Many agree with Mr. Rorty that with his new order their financial position would be improved, but for the true physician, ever since Hippocrates sired the profession, income has been secondary to professional obligations. They are heart and soul with any movement for government aid to medical research and preventive medicine. They draw a sharp line, however, between hospital insurance and disease prevention, which they concede are purchasable, and individual treatment, which they firmly deny can be regarded as a commodity. Moreover they have seen governmental bureaucracies at work, and they fear the paralyzing contagion of the politician's hand on their beloved profession. Mr. Rorty's book will quiet none of their misgivings.

Despite Mr. Rorty's oft-times astigmatic logic, he has written a thought-provoking, timely book, and has collected evidence inaccessible to many. It is to be hoped he will find many interested readers. No one in medical or social work questions the pressing need of an extended medical service. The more generally and argumentatively this need is discussed, the sooner we may hope to evolve the best way to go about meeting it.

Mabel S. Ulrich, M.D., is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins Medical School. During the War she was in charge of Red Cross health work in Minnesota.

Essence of Wilderness

A GATHERING OF BIRDS. By Donald Culross Peattie. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

THIS anthology of bird-literature is so good that it inevitably gives rise to the question: Why didn't someone think of doing it before? In one volume of normal size and format it has skimmed the cream from our heritage of English prose dealing with birds, bringing home to the reader what a magnificent heritage that really is. Here is the best of W. H. Hudson (in sixteen pages), of John Muir, of Audubon, Thoreau, Wallace, Alexander Wilson, Chapman, Murphy — nineteen writers in all, and 374 pages of text. Mr. Peattie, as host and toastmaster at this distinguished gathering, introduces each writer in turn with a commentary that is, in every case, a model of style and aptness. The format of the volume is impeccable, and Edward Shenton's illustrations seem to transcend the limitations of pen-and-ink to give the effect of paintings. Most of the nineteen selections conform to a high standard of science and literature alike—only one of them, the next to the shortest, lapsing at all seriously.

Drawing by Edward Shenton

This is a book that should be owned, for the simple reason that its pages are inexhaustible. After the first complete reading one returns again and again to favorite passages, whether they be Hudson's "Migration on the Pampas," Beebe's hoatzins, Gosse's Jamaican humming-birds, Sir Edward Grey's account of the tame robins at Fallodon, or others equally good. This reviewer suggests that it be kept at the bedside. The essence of wilderness caught within these pages provides an excellent antidote for too much twentieth-century civilization.

Family Tragedy in Spain

THE CHILDREN OF GUERNICA. By Hermann Kesten. New York: Alliance Book Corporation. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES BENÉT

TWO years ago the news of the complete destruction of the ancient Basque town, Guernica, ran through the world. German and Italian planes at the service of General Franco had wiped it out and machinegunned its people, even its sheep, "anything that moved." It is a famous story of the barbarism of fascism, and one expected that books would be written about it. But not such a book as Mr. Kesten's. This is not the story of the children of Guernica but purports to be the story of the children of Guernica's chemist, or, as we should say, druggist. They are by no means typical.

The book tells the story of the bombardment as experienced by the young boy. But this is only one incident, though the central one, in the family's story, which runs back earlier, then brings those that were not killed to Paris and exile. It was not a happy family even before the bombing. Just before the war began an uncle had returned from years abroad, a jovial scoundrel. His impact on the father, mother, and the children created strife. But somehow the reader feels that it was already latent in the neurotic sensitivity of the children, in the seemingly odd relation of their elders. The unhealthy quality comes in part from the author's failure to bring his people alive in action; their feet are never quite on the ground. The war comes, and the strain and the strife are multiplied. No one in the home is moved to participate in the war in any way. Bare mention indicates that anyone at all in the town took part. It is a lowering immensity in the distance, never part of the story, except as business deals are increasingly handicapped by war measures. The family itself scarcely expresses any awareness of the political issues involved; the father alone determines to take his family out to France.

There the family destroys itself further. Unable to achieve any understanding of the conflicts that have torn and ravaged half Europe, the more sensitive people attempt suicide. The unintelligent, the vicious, triumph. The enemy is never named, and the only solution proposed is that the children should become assassins. Thus the story is not at all typical of the experience of the Spanish.

James Benét spent a year and a half with the ambulance service in Loyalist Spain.

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From Jazz to Swing

AMERICAN JAZZ MUSIC. By Wilder Hobson. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1939. $2.50.

JAZZ: HOT AND HYBRID. By Winthrop Sargeant. New York: Arrow Editions. 1939. $5.

Reviewed by IRVING KOLODIN

WHETHER you consider jazz the symbol of a new cultural renaissance in this country, or whether, in your opinion, it is a banal and barbaric twittering, there can be no denial that jazz is. That is the attitude which has motivated the production of these two volumes. In their separate ways, each contributes considerably to the illumination of a subject which has been lauded and attacked, denounced and upheld—but rarely studied.

As a critical guide to jazz players and the music they produce, Mr. Hobson's volume is challenged only by Hugues Panassié's pioneering "Hot Jazz." If not as encyclopedic as the Frenchman's study, it is more painstakingly historic and more soundly critical. These are not merely comparative distinctions, but absolute ones; for Mr. Hobson's knowledge of the subject is voluminous and his enthusiasm unlimited.

He is particularly provocative, and most original in his critical contribution, in the section devoted to the "jazz language." Here he discusses tone color, rhythm, and "swing" with an acumen and directness which are as suggestive for the initiate as they are informative for the novice. Mr. Hobson points out that there has grown up, in jazz, a trend toward "vocalization" of the trumpet, trombone, and saxophone, in which there is little attempt to parallel the sounds that legitimate players of these instruments cherish. Rather the jazz player uses his brass or reed as an extension of the singing voice—producing sounds that are as characteristic of the jazz language as they are useless in any other idiom. The whole discussion is correlated to thirty generally available phonograph records, in which the points he develops may be heard and studied.

Mr. Sargeant's concentration is less on the characteristics of this or that performer, and more on the large outlines of the subject—the elements of jazz that distinguish it from formal concert-hall music, the nature of its procedures, its inherent precepts, such as they are. Emphatically in his favor is his excellent musicianship, which has enabled him to segregate, in musical notation, more of the typical phenomena of Negro jazz than have ever been put on paper before. Thus there are many illuminating examples of that polyrhythmic character which Mr. Sargeant rightly considers to be the basic peculiarity of jazz, and a highly interesting discussion of what he calls the "blues scale."

In common with Mr. Hobson, Mr. Sargeant cherishes a healthy dislike for the phase of jazz known as "commercial"—which employs the surface mannerisms of jazz playing, but is motivated by little of its basic spirit and vitality. This would automatically include most of the products of Tin Pan Alley as well as that specie of hybrid known as "symphonic jazz," which has no more relationship to either part of its title than a pork-pie hat has to cookery.

However, Mr. Sargeant's study has its own bias, expressed in his statement that his "interest in jazz is clinical rather than rhapsodic." This has its advantages in the portions of the study that are purely analytic, but his discussion of the esthetics and essential value of jazz, in the chapter headed "Jazz in Its Proper Place," makes one dubious of his real liking for jazz in its common manifestations. He seems impatient of its idolators, skeptical of its emotional basis, and frankly contemptuous of its right to be called an "art."

This disagreement with certain of his conclusions by no means lessens one's enthusiasm for the brilliant scholarship Mr. Sargeant has brought to his task, nor one's admiration for the skill and intelligence with which the material has been organized. An extensive bibliography of source material is a valuable adjunct of the book.

Benny Goodman, Pied Piper of swing, plays for the children of Hull House in Chicago.

THE KINGDOM OF SWING. By Benny Goodman and Irving Kolodin. New York: Stackpole Sons. 1939. $2.

Reviewed by ROBERT A. SIMON

IF you wanted to make a pretty terrible pun about it—and perhaps somebody already has made it—Benny Goodman's autobiography, "The Kingdom of Swing," written in collaboration with Irving Kolodin, might be called "From Rags to Riches." It's the narrative of a boy who learned to play clarinet in a synagogue music class for "maybe a quarter a lesson," and who has risen, by way of jazz, to an eminence where he earns maybe a quarter a note for playing the instrument as leader of one of the most famous of all dance bands. "The Kingdom of Swing" is a success story, but it's more than a chronicle of afflatus and affluence. It "sets" swing music in a clear perspective, explains it, and gives out, as swingumbobs have it, with solid stuff about an important musical influence.

Here, personified in a swingster who would be a distinguished fellow in music simply as an expert clarinetist, is a sort of autobiography of swing itself. There are two chapters of historical and critical interpolations by Mr. Kolodin, who, in a few pages, provides an excellent short course in the art. Mr. Goodman's reminiscences of early jam specialists, adventures with all kinds of orchestras, and the birth pains of Benny Goodman and His Orchestra trace, at least by implication, the career of a music that began as an extra-curricular diversion for dance men and became a sober study for gifted performers. It has become a Cause, too, but Mr. Goodman doesn't get lyrical about it, for which he rates an extra bow. He's a sane and modest citizen.

Mr. Kolodin's function, apart from his own chapters, is that of the writing partner in the enterprise. He has transcribed admirably the talk which Mr. Goodman would supply if you were able to catch up with him and sit him down long enough. Technically, this is ghost writing, but Mr. Kolodin is a skillful, tactful ghost, who never reckons without his host.

For swing lovers and students, "The Kingdom of Swing" is terrific value for maybe a couple of bucks. And, leaving the chirps to fall where they may, it's often fascinating Americana.

Robert A. Simon is music critic of The New Yorker.

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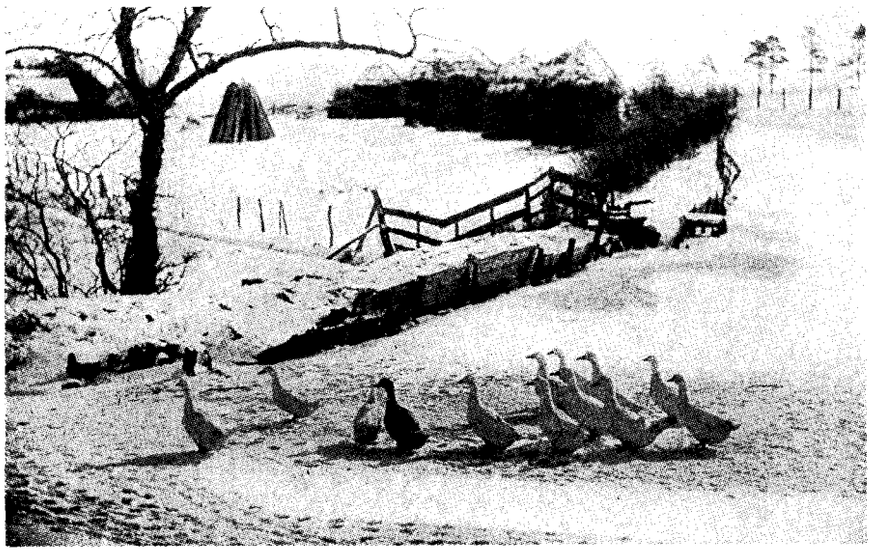

Winter on a Scottish Lowland farm. From "The Heart of Scotland" by George Blake (Scribners).

Poet and Peasant

PRIDE AND PASSION: ROBERT BURNS, 1759-1796. By DeLancey Ferguson. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

BETWEEN the madcap journalist-biographer who will sign a note on no prospects at all and the scholar-biographer who lies awake nights over a penny's inaccuracy there is the common-sense writer who avoids both extremes. Such a biographer is DeLancey Ferguson, author of the latest study of Burns. Mr. Ferguson pays his way in big bills, but his currency is obviously sound. Master of the details of his subject, he prefers to give results rather than processes. The "take" of a week's research, one may guess, is often packed into a single sentence. The finished work is a triumph of clean-cut, well-poised scholarship. It is no disparagement of other recent studies to say that for general purposes this is probably the best biography of Burns.

Instead of following one biographical line from birth to death, Mr. Ferguson uses several lines of study which are mostly parallel but occasionally tangent. These lines have names: Education, Men, Women, Livelihood, Song. Flanking them are an initial chapter on Scotland and a final chapter on "The Scot." The method employed necessarily involves a little repetition, but Mr. Ferguson handles his materials extremely well in his fundamental aim to say "what sort of man" Burns was. As the title suggests, the axis of the poet's life was mainly emotional, with pride at one extreme and passion at the other. Yet the biographer does not fail to let us see the hardheaded peasant-poet who disliked "scenery" and the persistent office-seeker who chanted of independence but who for a' that was not averse from a bit of lobbying. The whole man is made reasonably vivid and thoroughly credible, especially for the last five years of his life, where the data are thickest. In writing from "the records" instead of from hunches Mr. Ferguson tramples on a few legends, and he has some hints for colleagues in the field. Thus: Clarinda wasn't quite so important as has been made out; "Highland Mary" is largely tissue of fantasy; Burns did not "degenerate" at Dumfries. Sensationalism is absent from the book. Burns sinned prolifically, but his sinning lacked an element of subtlety and will not bear too much emphasis. Mr. Ferguson allows wine and women no more than their due place, and he gives one of his best chapters to "Song."

Critical commentary is only incidental in this biography. What there is, sometimes raises questions. Why draw a dubious analogy between Burns and Emerson when there is a more natural comparison with Whittier, who isn't mentioned at all? Why speak of the "weak" poetic influence of a writer blessed by so many later poets? In style Mr. Ferguson is more than competent, but he lacks sufficient play: he cannot quite shake the conviction that a committee of experts is looking over his shoulder as he writes. Well, let them look. They will find an excellent study, complementary to and worthy of the same author's edition of the letters of Burns. The public is invited to this book too, but it will fare well only if it does not expect too much coddling: omitting footnotes and bibliography does not necessarily make a book "popular." Mr. Ferguson strikes a medium between the learned and the entertaining; but when he leans, he leans toward scholars. Probably it is better so.

A Life amid Legends

SOLDIER OF THE CHURCH: The Story of Ignatius Loyola. By Ludwig Marcuse. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

ST. IGNATIUS attracts biographers. All that is known of his life and all the pious legends clustered round it are set down at length in the great histories of the Jesuits, and there are at least a score of respectable interpretive biographies, some by skeptics, some by devout believers, three or four of each in English, yet there is still plenty of room for more.

At thirty-four Ignatius, a ragged, ridiculous little cripple, who had failed to take sainthood by storm, sat hunched on a bench among schoolboys painfully conning Latin grammar. Ten years later he finally left the University of Paris with a hard-won M.A., and half a dozen youthful disciples, still utterly undistinguished. All around him Latin Christendom was in ruins, the Middle Ages, in which his stubborn dream life dwelt, were over; the Church was in decay. From his little band of seven grew the mighty order which was to reconquer half Europe for Rome and give it besides lands of which the popes had never dreamed, which was to stamp its character and the character of its founder indelibly on the art, politics, education, and religion of two centuries. When the first General of the Jesuits died in 1556, already his followers were preaching from Japan to the Andes, and their chief was more powerful in Europe than many princes.

To this extraordinary story Herr Marcuse brings a nervous, epigrammatic style, a scholar's knowledge of the Renaissance, an artist's feeling for its color and paradox, and a coolly critical modern mind. He makes biography read like fiction, and, if he suppresses the difference between guess and fact, sound scholarship controls most of the guesses, and the pace of the narrative excuses the rest. He has written an absorbing book from which the reader will rake a vivid impression of the surface of Loyola's life and times. But of the surface only. We are told that Ignatius was lamentably ignorant of economics and took a parochial view of world affairs, but not how he discovered the strategy which changed the course of history. We learn that, like other ascetics, Ignatius was a masochist, and that his visions were "mechanical irritations of a muscle," but whence came his wariness towards such things in his disciples? His doctrine of blind obedience is explained, but not how his own obedience brought such power, or why men followed him, or even what he wanted to use them for. A pious Catholic might assume the answers to such questions; a rationalist is expected to hunt for them.

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Road to the Vatican

PIUS XII: Pope of Peace. By Joseph F. Dinneen. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

POPE PIUS XII has an extraordinarily wide knowledge of affairs and of men. More specifically he is the sole Pontiff who ever set foot on American soil, having profited by journeys to both hemispheres and by intimate conversations with dignitaries of Church and State. In addition he is a competent philosopher in his own right, and a man of wide culture. Some of these things are discussed or at least hinted at in Mr. Dinneen's biography, which is more properly a compendium of what the author learned while active as a newspaperman in Rome. He discusses the daily routine of the Popes, relates anecdotes concerning recent Pontiffs, and describes the Conclave. Feeling that most books about the Vatican have been written by priests afraid to speak frankly lest they offend their Bishops, Mr. Dinneen utters his mind on a considerable variety of topics, ranging from the policies of Cardinal Merry del Val (whom he makes out to have been "a native of Spain") to the propriety of Bund meetings in New York.

The section which has most to do with Pope Pius XII is that devoted to a relatively minute account of his visit to the United States, as Cardinal Pacelli, during 1936. Major incidents in that memorable sojourn are set forth breezily and colorfully. But Mr. Dinneen, who apparently has a flair for dramatic situations, is so eager to transform Father Coughlin into the villain of the piece that he ignores happenings of some significance and piquancy. The concluding chapters discuss the passing of Pope Pius XI, the election of his successsor, and the world outlook which confronts the latter.

Mr. Dinneen, being a newspaperman and a Catholic, keeps both feet on the ground, indulges in no flippancies or subterranean explorations, and writes with the decorum and ease beloved of city editors. It would be unwise to turn to this book for special information. Frankly written for the broad public, it is content to bring together facts already known but never codified in relation to the new Pope. The critic would be satisfied to accept that design and its execution without further ado, if Mr. Dinneen had taken greater pains with a hundred odd sentences which, as they stand, are unfortunately at variance with historical exactness. Perhaps he has been so accustomed to the red pencil being in some one else's hands that he was embarrassed at the prospect of wielding it himself. At any rate, before issuing a new edition he might send his book to be sedulously combed by some learned priest who, however timid in the presence of his bishop, would find little to dissent from save details which, however unimportant as single phenomena, do become rather challenging in the aggregate. The illustrations which accompany the text are well chosen and excellently reproduced.

George N. Shuster is contributing editor of The Commonweal.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE MYSTERY OF THE STOLEN HATS *Bruce Graeme* (Lippincott: $2.)	Numerous hats and one American vanish in Paris. Three detectives—American, French, and English — connect disappearance with two murders.	Triple-barreled detective yarn done with considerable "Gallic humor" and finesse. French sleuth comes off with deductive and amatory honors.	*Très bien*
I'M NO MURDERER *Barry Perowne* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	Leroy of Scotland Yard unmasks "Peter Seven," gentleman crook, and discovers who killed old General Cavender and others.	Slightly confusing yarn of killings that stemmed from black deeds in Portuguese East Africa. Numerous flash-backs are irritating.	Passable
LIZZIE BORDEN: A STUDY IN CONJECTURE *Mrs. Belloc Lowndes* (Longmans: $2.)	Visit to Paris and fateful meeting there had much to do with outcome of celebrated case, opines author.	Vivid picture of thwarted Victorian spinster done with strict regard to atmosphere, morals, and manners of time.	Grade A
MURDER IN STAINED GLASS *Margaret Armstrong* (Random House: $2.)	Calcined bones in Conn. stained-glass artist's kiln point to his murder. Inquisitive Miss Trumbull smells mouse and springs trap.	Another variation of gambit quite popular this year. Ending has novel twist and stained-glass attitudes are attractive.	Able
MURDER ON DISPLAY *Christopher Hale* (Crime Club: $2.)	Woman found strangled in window of Mich. dept. store. Killer strikes again. Rolls-driving Bill French solves both cases.	Garrulous bucolic characters supply more than average amount of amusing dialogue to sinuously plotted and well worked out story.	Satisfactory

Genius of the Renaissance

THE MIND OF LEONARDO DA VINCI. By Edward McCurdy. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by SYDNEY J. FREEDBERG

IT would be rather too generous to call Edward McCurdy a "scholar" of Leonardo da Vinci. The less pretentious label "student" fits him better. His present volume which embodies material handled in different fashion in earlier works of the author is the reissue of a book first published in 1928. Though its text remains unchanged, both its appearance and its price have been made considerably more attractive.

The book presents the same virtues and faults today that it suggested at the first reading. McCurdy's commentary falls between two stools. It is not profound enough or complete enough to be convincingly scholarly, nor sufficiently facile and interesting to absorb the lay reader. Yet, this commentary does serve the purpose of effecting a smooth progression from one island to another of Leonardo's own thought.

Mostly, the comment is subordinate to the text. Only in the last division of the volume, which is a reworking of an essay of 1904 on Leonardo's art, does McCurdy's voice sound louder than Leonardo's. McCurdy apparently feels more secure as an analyst of Leonardo's painting and sculpture than as an analyst of Leonardo's "mind," but it is unfortunately in this department that he does his subject least justice. In those earlier sections of the book which deal with the biographical matter of Leonardo's life, with his belief, his travels, his researches in aviation, etc., the reader is already uncomfortably conscious of a deep fault: that he is being presented with a superficial picture only of certain fragmentary facets of Leonardo's "mind." There is no integration by the author of these various facets, no attempt to ascertain the deeper implications of Leonardo's thought, and no power to draw together scattered threads so that they may present a unified whole. The commentary is literally only a commentary, and not an analysis or interpretation. In the passages devoted to Leonardo's art this fault is doubly accentuated, for there we are given, not a real interpretation of, or insight into, this most important aspect of the genius's activity, but only an inadequate and rather primitive Morellian essay on attribution and documentation.

I am convinced that the inability to draw such an integrated picture as I should wish to see is not the fault of the nature of the subject. I wonder if the way is not to look for the key to a total picture of Leonardo first through his art, and only secondly through his literary *Nachlass.*

The cumulative effect of my objections seems rather severe. But after all, it is mostly Leonardo who speaks in the pages of McCurdy's book, and he is certainly worth listening to.

Sydney J. Freedberg is a member of the Fine Arts department of Harvard University.

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Growing with Nature

PETER THE WILD BOY. By C. M. Tennant. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

TWO hunters in Hanover in 1725 found in the woods an adolescent "natural" leading a sylvan and nudist existence. He was captured, and in turn captured the popular fancy, was brought to the court of George I of England, where he became the ward of the King, and for the moment he was the wonder of all London. Swift made the craze the object of a biting satire. Defoe also tried his hand at the tempting subject of a completely natural being confronted by artificial society. Lord Monboddo used poor Peter the Wild Boy as the type specimen of his idea of primitive man in a state of gibbering arboreal savagery. Now C. M. Tennant, an English author, has employed him in a slender and precious novel, which frankly confesses that "it does not claim to be historically correct." Historically, the facts are that Peter was an imbecile, that the court got tired of him and got rid of him to a farmer, and that, his later life protractedly obscure, eventless, and useless, he died at an advanced age.

The author, quite legitimately utilizing Peter simply as a theme, has told another tale. Peter is represented as the embodiment of what man would be if he could grow up among birds and squirrels, deer and leaves—a being without guile, artifice, ambition, or industry, possessiveness, or any folly. Because of his love of the wild, Peter turns the cattle into the corn and releases the rabbits from their snares. Against him are pitted all the dark forces in ourselves. From the moment the two hunters see Peter and pour birdshot into his legs in order to capture him alive and sell him, he is exploited. The Court exploits him; he is exploited as an agricultural serf with an iron collar on his neck. He is picked up, when he tries to get back to the woods and fields, as a vagrant because the constable wants to get a promotion for arresting a spy; he is sent to the Bridewell where the Chaplain tries to get him to repent of his "sin."

Here is indeed the subject for a satire, a fantasy, a sermon with a tender and Christlike moral—a moral with which to slap moralists in the face. Imagine what Hans Christian Andersen would have done with this. Or Hardy, or Hudson. But the author misses one telling opportunity after another, while she devotes pages to the characters around Peter and their confused and dismal story of ingrowing rustic tragedy, as they make their unrustical speeches. The grand climax of the plot is the moment when Peter discovers Thomas, a hearty animal of a farm boy whom he has always silently adored, kissing and fondling a young girl. Peter, who is supposed to be so natural, is so incensed by this dastardly act (though indifferent to the lass) that he picks Thomas up in his mighty arms and hurls him to earth, stunning him. Then he runs away to the woods and lies weeping among the ferns. That's the end. Now, I *ask* you . . . !

The whole is done in an affectedly simple, even a simplicist style.

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Published by E. P. Dutton & Company — $2.75

READ "THE POWER HOUSE"—BY BENJAMIN APPEL

COMING NEXT WEEK
THE SPRING NUMBER
OF THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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The Spoor Sale

By JOHN T. WINTERICH

A LARGELY run-of-the-shelves book-auction season will soar to a pyrotechnic climax beginning April 26th with the dispersal at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York of the John A. Spoor collection. No such superlative assemblage of the bright particular stars of the romantic group of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries can ever again be brought together. Few comparable collections in any field have been assembled in the past.

Burns, Goldsmith, Gray, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Lamb, the Brontës, the Brownings are represented mostly in long runs that include in almost every instance their rarest ephemera no less than their durable monuments. Here is Byron's "Fugitive Pieces," his first, and self-suppressed, book, one of four known copies; Gray's fragile "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College," one of nine recorded copies; Lamb's will, and the autograph album compiled by the Lambs' adopted daughter, Emma Isola, including a Keats sonnet; the notebook used jointly by Shelley and Mary Godwin which was originally encased with Shelley's heart; the only known copy in original state of Shelley's "The Necessity of Atheism," which brought about his expulsion from Oxford; the only recorded presentation copy of Shelley's "A Vindication of Natural Diet" and a copy of his "A Refutation of Deism," of which perhaps six are known (a persistent pamphleteer, this Shelley); Elizabeth Barrett's "The Battle of Marathon," one of perhaps ten known, and Robert Browning's "Pauline," one of four known signed copies—when Yale acquired a "Pauline," William Lyon Phelps organized a parade through the streets of New Haven and the prize was borne on a velvet cushion.

There is a compensating congruity between these fragile effulgencies and the hand which gathered them. John Alden Spoor was a man of high emprises, an accurately self-proclaimed capitalist whose broad activities included the chairmanship of the Chicago Junction Railway Company and of the Union Stock Yard and Transit Company. Obviously his heart was in his collection—one infers (while conceding a certain relationship between the two) that Mr. Spoor was keener to know the whereabouts and price of a Goldsmith manuscript than the status of July wheat. And his mind was in his collection as well. Mr. Spoor had competent bibliopolic advice (Walter Hill contributes a good foreword to the sale catalogue) but he obviously knew what he wanted, and what he wanted (and got) went to form one of the most intelligently assembled libraries ever to appear at public sale, as well as one of the most valuable.

Mr. Spoor died in 1926, perhaps in the conviction that Coolidge prosperity would last forever. His books rested securely in the vaults of the First National Bank of Chicago (of which he had been a director) while the face of the world changed. One may speculate pleasantly as to what might have happened if they had come on the market some time before the bubble was shattered. One may speculate as to what is going to happen to them in these latter days and soon have the answer. Most of the collection will eventually gravitate to public or semi-public libraries. But not now—libraries are always short of cash and long of time, more so now than ever. They can wait.

Who will the ad interim custodians be? Here are wares to unloose pursestrings if the thing is at all possible. There are plenty of collectors who lack them and want them and can pay for them. Will they? And will two or more want them sufficiently to enter the lists as valiantly as collectors did in the brave days of old? The outcome will be well worth watching, and not by adherents of bibliophily alone.

Paumonok Today and Yesterday

DISCOVERING LONG ISLAND. By William Oliver Stevens. Illustrated by the author. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by H. ALLEN SMITH

MR. STEVENS is by no means a Carl Carmer, though there is a kinship between "Discovering Long Island" and "Listen for a Lonesome Drum"—a similarity of method if not of approach. He writes as a tourist for a tourist audience. The title itself, the timing of publication, and the concluding chapter suggest that author and publisher had Mr. Whalen's Fair in mind when the volume was planned.

Mr. Stevens starts his explorations on the North Shore, beyond the suburbs. He proceeds from village to village, examining old churches, old houses. Much of his history seems to have been taken from the pamphlets issued now and again by local historians and the Long Island Railroad. When he gets to the eastern end of the island he becomes more interesting. His pictures of Greenport, Shelter Island, and Gardiner's Island are excellent. He all but ignores Sag Harbor, whose story would make a book in itself. He is fascinated by the Montauk peninsula, from East Hampton to the light, and he returns westward by the South Shore.

He had to cover a lot of ground and he missed many things that belong in the story. Some day a whopping book will be written about Long Island. Benjamin F. Thompson tried it many years ago and came up with three hefty volumes. But he cluttered his pages with dreary genealogical tables, and indulged in little conceits, such as his attack on William Cullen Bryant. Mr. Stevens's volume is a travelogue, written by an artist with a fine sense of pictorial values. He is more at home describing the beauties of Hither Hills, or an ancient windmill, than he is with the bizarre personalities who peopled the island in the past. Native legend holds little interest for him. Yet there is pleasure in the thought that his book will lead many New Yorkers (as well as outlanders) to "discover" the fascinating stretch of land which the Indians called Paumonok and which is still, under the law, Nassau, and not Long Island.

Palestine Problems

NO EASE IN ZION. By T. R. Feiwel. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. $3.75.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

PENETRATING, skeptical, and often scintillating in its interpretation, this book is a momentous addition to the already overweighted stock of our literature on Palestine. At a time when the fate of the Jewish National Home hangs in the balance, it attacks the knotty problem of Zionism's future in admirably unemotional terms. Mr. Feiwel draws upon an exceptional knowledge of modern psychology and of Marxism to explain not only the checkered history of Jews and Arabs over the centuries, but also that slightly crazy, highly Messianic, improbably courageous movement—the words are his—which has thus far succeeded in implanting a solid block of 450,000 determined Jews in a strategic corner of the Mediterranean.

The conclusions reached by the author are highly pertinent to the existing impasse in the Holy Land. With an imperially-minded Britain and a ruthless clique of semi-fascist Arab nationalist leaders opposed to their extreme aspirations, the Zionists must recognize that their program requires extensive modification. That vision of Palestine which Dr. Chaim Weizmann foresaw—as Jewish as England is English and America is American—must go by the board. It must be replaced by a federal system of government, in which Jewish immigration and areas of settlement will be restricted and the ideal of Jewish nationalism pared down to that of a common Palestinian citizenship.

This is not Zionism, but it may be the only alternative to destruction. If the British government will lend its aid, such a plan may provide a patchwork compromise which will bridge the gap between Arabs and Zionists and open the way for better relations between the younger elements in both groups—whose incompatibilities are less serious than their elders'. Here, in Arab-Jewish amity, lies the greatest hope for eventual large-scale Jewish settlement in the Middle East. Everything depends, however, on the trend of world events which reacts so directly both on the volume of Jewish refugees and the sentiments with which they are greeted by the Arabs of Palestine. More than ever, the Holy Land is today a pawn on the diplomatic chessboard of the great powers.

David H. Popper is the author of "The Puzzle of Palestine."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 264)

ROBERT FROST: COLLECTED POEMS

Like a piece of ice on a hot stove the poem must ride on its own melting. A poem . . . may not be worried into being. . . . It will forever keep its freshness. It can never lose its sense of a meaning that once unfolded by surprise as it went.

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Tragedy or Violence?

THE SELECTED POETRY OF ROBINSON JEFFERS. Edited by Una Jeffers. New York: Random House. $3.50.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

MR. JEFFERS anticipates objections to his work in a very interesting poem, "Self-Criticism in February." It is in the form of interior dialogue, too long to quote here; but in it he raises the following points: (*a*) his poetry has a disproportionate tendency towards violence; (*b*) the characters of his fictions are too often "ghosts and demons and people like phantoms . . . praying for destruction"; (*c*) he is without an "ideal," he has never sung "That God is love, or perhaps that social Justice will soon prevail." In answer to (*a*) he observes that our time is founded on violence, "pointed for more massive violence"; to (*b*), "Alas, it is not unusual in life"; and to (*c*) he says, echoing Nietzsche, "I can tell lies in prose." The answers seem conclusive; but as one turns to them again and again during the reading of these poems, one's doubts about them increase.

The long narrative poems provoke the most doubt. Our time is "founded on violence," the poet reflects the time. But does he? Surely there is violence enough: incest, bestiality, imbecility, arson, murder, suicide, all nakedly set down with the vehemence of a latter-day Kyd. But the violence exists (or a lack of art makes it seem to exist) for its own sake. It is meaningless beyond itself. Well, so is the violence of our time: I am thinking, for instance, of the aerial bombing of child refugees in Catalonia clamoring at the French border. It would seem, then, that reflection is not enough; that reflection is not true. It is not true, because it lacks philosophy. (A large word; but I mean the opposite of the nihilistic disgust that is Mr. Jeffers's attitude towards his people.) And from this too-true-to-be-true violence a disconcerting quality emerges: mirth.

"Look on the tragic loading of this bed." What is it that keeps the corpse-strewn finales of "Othello," of "Hamlet," of "Lear" from being Grand-Guignol and funny? The tragic passion, the affirmative attitude towards human suffering. In "Thurso's Landing," "Give Your Heart to the Hawks," and "Tamar" there is only the suffering, and the attitude towards it is destructive. A short poem of this nature may succeed, and, indeed, Mr. Jeffers's short poems are generally his best ones; but disgust and horror cannot successfully be sustained for so long as this poet would sustain them. By the time Helen Thurso cuts Reave's throat with his own hunting-knife and then proceeds to kill herself, oh very lingeringly, with abortion-tablets (whatever they may be), there has been so much visceral outrage, so much public drinking of blood, that the temptation to laugh is almost overpowering. And it is not an hysterical laughter.

Two of these long poems are valid, although their validity may be the fortuitous result of their being placed in this Californian Chamber of 'Orrors. "The Tower beyond Tragedy" is the myth of Agamemnon's death; and while Mr. Jeffers insists on the incestuous Elektra-Orestes theme with a gusto that would probably astonish Sophocles, the remoteness of the myth, the grandeur adhering to it, and the magnificent rhetoric of many of Clytemnestra's speeches combine to make a powerful poem. Observe, in this case, that the poet's attitude was largely determined by tradition. The other success is "The Loving Shepherdess," a parable of self-sacrificing love. Here the pastoral quality is so beautifully managed that one forgets the essential absurdity of the heroine in her philanthropic quest. The myth atmosphere is again in control: *credo quia absurdum.*

Mr. Jeffers's great virtues are the ability to tell a story and to sustain tremendous rhythms for long periods. His curious verse-form, a development of Whitman's, is perfectly suited to narrative. In his descriptions of scenery he is always effective. What he lacks is restraint (yes, let's admit that Nature is unrestrained) and, above all things, humor. One does not mean by "humor" a sense of fun, but a sense of balance, of design, of (let us brave the answer to Objection A) proportion. Some day someone is going to laugh right out in meeting.

Young Man, Go Where?

RURAL YOUTH: THEIR SITUATION AND PROSPECTS. By Bruce L. Melvin and Elna N. Smith. Research Monograph XV, Works Progress Administration. Washington: Government Printing Office.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

MIGRATION in quest of "opportunity" is an old American custom. It has taken many forms and directions. One part of that migration has been the movement of rural youth from the farms and villages to the cities. This has been checked during the depression, with the result that there has been a "piling up" of youth in rural areas. Almost literally, they have no place to go. Agriculture cannot begin to absorb their increasing number; neither can the cities, already burdened with unemployment.

While the number of rural youth is increasing, their opportunities are decreasing. Before the depression came to the city, it came to the country. Trends toward the mechanization of agriculture and the large-scale ownership of land have affected the economic prospects of the individual. Large areas of farming country have got in a very bad way indeed—conspicuously the wheat-raising region now known as the Dust Bowl, likewise the Cotton Belt of the Old South. There are no longer new lands to be opened up, and much of the hitherto cultivated land is no longer profitable. Staying where they are is no solution of the problem of these surplus boys and girls, but where will they find a better 'ole?

It is less likely than ever that they can go *up*, becoming farm owners. Children of present farm owners have to start as laborers, and usually do not get beyond the laborer or tenant class. In many sections there is a lowered demand for laborers. The percentage of tenant-operated farms has greatly risen, but the condition of tenant farmers is getting worse. So they return to the laborer class, if they can get jobs. Many of the workers are "casuals," following the crops hither and yon, and often arriving to find the notice: "No more workers wanted." Some do try the cities—and relief.

What of education and recreation for rural youth? The rural states, because of their limited tax-paying ability, make the most meagre provisions for education. So it happens that areas with the largest proportion of children have the poorest schools—and the lightest attendance. Recreationally, the automobile, the motion picture and the radio have come in—not unmixed blessings. Local community controls have been weakened. Rural areas cannot supply the various social and recreational services they so badly need. Despite the excellent work of numerous agencies, a majority of rural youth have not had the advantages of their specialized programs.

No amount of education will be of much benefit to these young people if opportunities for gainful employment are lacking. Some of the New Deal agencies have been doing a tremendous amount of fundamental research on problems which this nation will some day have to understand and face. This report, the best document extant on the problem of rural youth, is only one item in the arsenal of necessary knowledge.

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The New Books

Biography

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH: Architect and Dramatist, 1664-1726. By Laurence Whistler. Macmillan. 1939. $5.

The creator of Lord Foppington and Sir John Brute in comedy, and of Castle Howard and Blenheim Palace in stone, has waited two hundred years for this, his first biography. The book is neither a volume of annotated research nor of psychological speculation. The author sticks pretty close to recorded facts about Vanbrugh. Here is a running account of the staging of his plays, a chapter on the Kit Cat Club, mention of Vanbrugh's career as soldier and as Herald. Inevitably, the story of Vanbrugh's life becomes overweighted with the record of his architectural ventures. The biography approaches drama in the retelling of the long feud between Vanbrugh and Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.

The book adds little to the knowledge of Vanbrugh's dramatic career except to stress anew the fact that even early eighteenth century England proved too Puritan to allow him to exercise for long his masculine, unmoral genius in the theater. On Vanbrugh's architecture Whistler writes as an appreciator rather than a student. The age of Anne is partially reconstructed. The dependence of the arts, and of artists, upon politics is made apparent. But Sir John himself is only seen, distantly and momently, as when he is striding the grounds at Woodstock.

R. S.

OUR FAMILY. By Adet and Anor Lin. John Day. 1939. $2.

This is a Chinese equivalent of the Abbé children's first book, "Around the World in Eleven Years." Like the Abbés, the young Lins have traveled widely, use quaint English, and speak their opinions of their family frankly. The book is written by the three daughters of Lin Yutang, Adet, sixteen, Anor, thirteen, and Meimei, eight. The two eldest do most of the writing, and Meimei sets down her own ingenuous comments from time to time in the form of footnotes. It is Meimei who says of the subway, "I was in the crowd and didn't enjoy it much. I was like a mouse in a wood."

The girls describe their family in detail—father "who has a marverlas degestion" and fries eggs in the middle of the night, mother who always fears getting fat; and each writes about the other sisters. They explain how they got their names. They give an account of their travels and often analyze and compare the differences in life and manners and customs in America, France, and China. They have patriotic feelings about China, particularly now that the war with Japan rouses their love of their country. Like the Abbés, all this is put into naive English with misspellings and odd turns of speech. A few of the expressions baffled us. We could not understand "Adet bought Vergin Mary's poslane model," and "Everything was so immutual as a hotel, as a manager, as a waiter," sounded like pure Gertrude Stein. But we like "the May rain which we call women's rain, thin and small and last a long time."

Pearl Buck wrote the introduction to the book, and there is an attractive photograph of the three young authors on the jacket. "Our Family" is a frank and lively account of life in a Chinese family, a little milder and a little politer than its American counterpart. Adet, Anor, and Meimei should meet Patience, Richard, and John.

R. C. B.

Fiction

THEY STILL SAY NO. By Wells Lewis. Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. $2.50.

Sinclair Lewis's son has written the story of a young man eager for amorous experience. At Harvard he makes awkward passes at two girls, without success. On his way to spend the summer in Mexico he is thwarted, though not by their saying "No," twice more. After another failure in Mexico, he is successful—with a nymphomaniac. He goes back to Harvard, feeling himself experienced but a little disillusioned. During this time he takes little interest in anything but the numerous girls. His activities are most ordinary; he mixes with the dullest people in contemporary society, the well-to-do bourgeois, and his comments on them are uninteresting.

Wells Lewis shows none of his father's early flashing insight into American life and character, but then he hasn't had his father's advantage of being brought up in Sauk Center. Wells Lewis writes, at times, like this:

> Blond hair and ash-blond hair, thin body and slim, soft body, they stood in front of each other, beneath the branches of the tree that guarded the doorway, ignoring the gentle rain. A girl's perennial search for love, a boy's conscious search for sex and unconscious longing for something more than sex, were both focused on an object that might, might be what they were searching for.

Quite a lot of the book is like that. It seems a little unfair—no matter how customary—to quote as bad a thing as one can find. But a sample of Mr. Lewis's best wouldn't bring up the average very far.

The novel's chief character is a young man with money and leisure who is expected to spend four years waiting for—not precisely earning—a university degree. It is silly to ask us to share and sympathize in this pointless existence—without even presenting it in decent prose. Wells Lewis may not have intended his novel to be taken seriously, as a comment on college life. Yet it is a gloomy thought that this story is a reflection of the ideas of a considerable number of the students at our institutions of higher learning. The book ends with a question by one of the boys, after he has glanced at newspaper headlines: "What will you do if the United States gets into a World War?" Characteristically, no answer is recorded.

J. B.

MEDIEVAL PAGEANT. By John Revell Reinhard. Harcourt, Brace. 1939. $4.

If half the great story-tellers of the Middle Ages that you ever heard of, and some you never heard of, were to meet in an Irish monastery and pass a long winter's night in telling a hundred and fifty tales interspersed with ballads and jokes and allusions to other stories, it might puzzle a great scholar to be sure which tales were told straight and by the right persons, but there's no question that some grand stories would be told, and that you would delight to hear them as long as you could keep awake. That's what happens in this book, which follows no other order or principle except that one good story leads to another, and that all of them are old, coming from somewhere between the tenth century and the sixteenth, and that most of them are new, having been forgotten long ago and decently embalmed by scholars on a catafalque of footnotes. It's good to have them alive again for easy shirtsleeve persons to read in good, straightforward English. You will want to keep them about you for those hours when you tire of modern novels and are willing to listen to the story-tellers of an age which asked of its fiction, not psychoanalysis or social significance, but that something astonishing or blood-curdling or richly comic should keep happening all the time.

G. M.

Miscellaneous

I THINK ALOUD IN AMERICA. By Odette Keun. Longmans, Green. 1939. $3.

Odette Keun has fluency, verve, and dauntless courage in pronouncing judgment on what she observes, and as a result her book is generally interesting and sometimes affronting. She has a provoking habit of communing with herself through the medium of an imaginary character with whom she debates the pros and cons of her own attitudes and beliefs, and she has no hesitations as to the correctness of the conclusions at which she arrives. Authoritarianism, democracy, marriage, New York, football—she writes of them all with the same positiveness and on certain aspects of them with complete wrongness. But she has the French woman's shrewdness and often her basic common sense, she has zest and an inquiring mind, quickness

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of observation, and on occasions a flashing insight. She discusses American public institutions and the American system with the faultiest sort of background against which to project her exposition, but on the other hand she has some things to say on American traits and manners that are penetrating and true. Traveling back and forth through the United States and meeting people of sufficiently divergent social groups as she went to get different points of view, she felt herself entitled to comment on every phase of our culture. Mixed with a good deal of chaff is a fair harvest of interesting discussion. And right or wrong, Madame Keun is always lively.

A. L.

HOW TO THINK STRAIGHT. By Robert H. Thouless. Simon & Schuster. 1939. $2.

The recent lay interest in semantics and logic has encouraged the head of the Psychology Department at the University of Glasgow to revise and "Americanize" his "Straight and Crooked Thinking," published first in 1932. "Americanization" means the inclusion of examples of fuzzy thinking from American sources—even from the works of that eminent American logician, Westbrook Pegler. Comparison of these examples with those in the earlier book indicates that Americans can think quite as crookedly as the English. We commonly use the questionable devices to which Mr. Thouless devotes his chapters: emotional meanings, the "all and some" subterfuge, logical fallacies, tricks of suggestion, strained analogies, vagueness and prejudice, misplaced prestige, technical vocabulary, and various other habits of thought. The book concludes with a list of thirty-four dishonest polemical tricks and suggested remedies, imaginary discussions which exemplify them, and several tests of reasoning for the reader. When your opponent sinks to the undiscussed level of logical paradoxes, however—for example, if he asserts that it is impossible to prove by reason that conclusions reached by reason are fallacious—then recommending this excellent little book is not enough. English or American, the only possible remedy is mayhem.

R. B.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCOTLAND. By Agnes Mure Mackenzie. Macmillan. 1939. $3.75.

With this volume, the fifth to appear but the first in subject matter, Miss Mackenzie completes her study of Scottish history. Here she covers a large period, from the earliest times to 1286, but her careful scholarship has managed some excellent condensation which is all the more valuable because it provides in brief form material which has mainly been obtainable only in bulk. She has also produced a narrative which is considerably more readable than the earlier volumes have been, largely because she has had to curb her propensity for argument over the various religious controversies which blacken later Scottish history. In spite of their tendency towards verbosity, Miss Mackenzie's five volumes constitute probably the best and certainly the most thorough recent history of Scotland.

C. D. A.

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

OLD Q. has been gardening all day and crepitates in every sinew. ☞So chilly a spring, his daffodils are only just out: they are always late, he planted them too deep. ☞His thoughts are like that too. ☞Found himself rereading some Conrad; enjoying, as always, the great Pole's constant errors of *shall* and *will;* and his noble memoir *A Personal Record.* ☞Greatly we envy anyone who has not yet encountered the fascination of that unique autobiography.

☞At a time when much energy is going toward plans for destruction, it's a pleasure to buy the attractive stickers of the National Wildlife Federation, of which the eminent cartoonist Jay N. Darling is president. Its funds go to preserve all kinds of American wild birds and animals. On Long Island the Federation supports the Wildfowl Sanctuary at Quogue. ☞Speaking of Conrad, we often think of his definition (in *A Personal Record*) of a novel: "a conviction of our fellow-men's existence strong enough to take upon itself a form of imagined life clearer than reality." ☞Most of the cruelties of men are simply due to a deficiency in that conviction. ☞If Musso and his Black Chins were really convinced that other people actually exist, they would scarcely have gone warring, on a Good Friday, against a young mother and a 2-day-old baby. ☞For Musso, the Hot Swastika Bun. ☞But what is the Prudential Insurance Company going to use now as an advertising slogan?

☞We were disturbed to note the J. B. Lippincott Company announcing (in a press note) Shakespeare's birthday as May 5. The publishers of the most famous of all Shakespeares, the Furness Variorum Edition, better look up their dates. The Swan was born, and died also, on April 23. ☞The best buy we've noticed in a long while is in a catalogue of G. David, famous bookseller at 16 St. Edwards' Passage, Cambridge (England):—De Quincey's Works in 16 vols., the 1862 edition, for 16 shillings. We'll gladly split the set with any adventurer who'll take the trouble to write and procure them. ☞The heraldic shields for the British Pavilion at Moby Whalen's World's Fair were designed by Anthony R. Wagner whose official job is "Portcullis" of the College of Arms. ☞Mr. Wagner's *Historic Heraldry of Britain* will be issued by Oxford Press in May. ☞The "Portcullis" of American heraldry is Mr. W. S. Hall, of Snyder & Hall, who is now on his spring trip vending Northamerican books in the Windward and Leeward Islands, the Antilles, the Panama Canal Zone and Sloppy Joe's at Havana. ☞Wherever Mr. Hall travels he insists on the *S.R.L.* following him every week.

☞Miss Leura Dorothy Bevis, whom we first knew as a mermaid at Dawson's in Los Angeles, is now manager of the San Pasqual Press at 335 S. Raymond Ave., Pasadena. ☞The Gotham Book Mart, 51 West 47 Street, is planning a decorous but spectacular and appropriate funerary display for the publishing day of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake,* now announced for May 8. ☞Ben De Casseres, 593 Riverside Drive, has had 25 sets (3 volumes to a set) of his books bound in red buckram; autographed and inscribed to the customer at $25 a set. ☞Old Ben, who tosses prose as a comet does its flaming hair and does pyrography across the pellucid, is as full of apocalypse as any writer of our time. ☞If you're Yale you've got to have it, the boys are saying about Billy Phelps's agreeable (and probably disorderly; we haven't seen it) autobiography. But it remains a mystery, how come it's published by Oxford instead of New Haven. ☞A vivid magnesium-flash is the passage from Lloyd George's *Memoirs of the Peace Conference* which Yale University Press excerpted for its spring catalogue:—

> There never was a greater contrast, mental or spiritual, than that between Wilson and Clemenceau. Wilson with his high but narrow brow, his fine head with its elevated crown, and his dreamy but untrustful eye—the make-up of the idealist who is also something of an egoist. Clemenceau, with his powerful head and the square brow of the logician—the head conspicuously flat topped, with no upper story in which to lodge the humanities, the ever vigilant and fierce eye of the animal who has hunted and been hunted all his life.

☞What is there in pious old Q.'s simple and ornery notes that makes people write to ask him such astonishing questions? The Department of Public Speaking of a Kansas college questionnaires him thus: "What specific technique for securing and holding audience attention do you employ as far as *speech content*

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is concerned?" ☞Old Q. does not commit much forensics, but he has one hunch: any speaker who begins with "Mr. Chairman, Honored Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen," etc., or any salutation of that kind, is usually just stalling. ☞A fairly sound rule is to begin by chaffing the chairman's introduction. ☞But anyone who even asks such a question obviously knows nothing whatever of the psyche of public soliloquy. There are no set rules; every occasion is different, and must be studied, if possible, on its own wave-length. ☞Another fantastic question, from a university in California: "Tell me what you believe to be the function of rare books, not only in the college library, but in the library world at large?" ☞Surely this is no more answerable than What is the function of ruined castles, or clumps of birch trees, or vintage wines, or amethysts? ☞The function of rare books, we guess, is to be rare; to give a highly technical, specialized and associative pleasure to those susceptible thereof. One can hardly say more than that without raving. ☞Of Public Speaking (as Lord Bacon would say): last week Old Q. was called upon to address a suburban club of ladies. ☞Seen from the platform such an array of colorful and humoresque spring bonnets was a delightful spectacle: like a jumble of confetti. ☞Old Q. implored them, since they had so much fantasy on top of their heads, to keep some inside their heads also. ☞We had the pleasure of talking with M. André Maurois, whom we had not seen for some years: and reminded him of the grand tale he once told us about Rilke's Overcoat. It always seemed to us a subtly symbolic and mischievous fable: and lo, M. Maurois had almost forgotten it. That, too, was perhaps a parable.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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	13-S	14-K	15-N		16-S	17-H	18-T	19-L	20-P		21-S	22-Y	23-K	24-R	25-O		26-Y	
27-X	28-L	29-K	30-O	31-D	32-T		33-C	34-M		35-T	36-K	37-J	38-O	39-M	40-X	41-D	42-Q	
43-H		44-B	45-E		46-M	47-R	48-H		49-C	50-G	51-I	52-Q	53-Y	54-Y	55-D	56-L		
57-U	58-K	59-H	60-V	61-L		62-N	63-B		64-R	65-I	66-C		67-V	68-X	69-L	70-O	71-J	
72-D		73-A	74-N		75-P	76-M	77-A		78-W	79-S	80-D	81-H	82-G	83-O	84-L	85-F		
86-W	87-D	88-Q	89-F	90-E	91-P	92-R		93-U	94-S	95-D	96-E	97-G		98-A	99-N		100-E	
101-I	102-L		103-W	104-V	105-M	106-R	107-D	108-O	109-Y	110-X	111-Q	112-K	113-C	114-G	115-L	116-J	117-D	
	118-S	119-H	120-L	121-G	122-P	123-I		124-O	125-N	126-P	127-U	128-J	129-L	130-C		131-N	132-P	
133-U	134-S	135-H	136-V	137-Y		138-H	139-M		140-A	141-R	142-N		143-U	144-F	145-O	146-P		
147-K	148-J	149-H	150-I		151-F	152-A	153-B		154-M	155-C	156-B	157-S		158-X	159-P	160-K	161-N	
	162-B		163-J	164-P	165-D	166-R		167-X	168-C	169-G	170-H	171-N		172-H	173-B	174-E		
175-L	176-N	177-Q	178-I		179-X	180-S	181-D	182-P		183-F	184-Y	185-E	186-A					

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. First rate; mighty good (colloq.).

B. Parti-colored saddle blanket (Sw. U. S.).

C. Good spirit.

D. Quality of being vast.

E. Chimpanzee.

F. Advertisements.

G. Kind of salad.

H. Employing questions and answers.

I. Pole used to direct tree-felling.

J. Silver kings (fish).

K. Boyhood home of Mark Twain.

L. Poem by Keats. (four words).

M. Pertaining to old age.

N. Tousled (comp. nonsense word).

O. Giving notice of.

P. Siren giving to Naples its ancient name.

Q. Opposites of good (pl.).

R. High-seated buggy with heavy side-pieces.

S. Capable of making a solemn declaration (law).

T. Pilfer.

U. Gives a twist to.

V. Concerns, regards (obs.).

W. Culmination.

X. Stain, blemish.

Y. Historical poem by Tennyson.

WORDS

77 186 73 98 11 152 140

153 44 156 63 162 173

66 49 130 168 113 33 155

31 87 107 95 41 117 165 80 181 72 55

45 185 100 174 90 96

183 144 7 89 151 85

82 50 97 121 169 114

43 135 172 48 81 138 170 17 10 149 119 59

150 101 178 65 51 123

116 148 71 128 37 8 163

112 29 36 14 23 147 58 160

19 120 129 2 175 102 84 69 28 115 56 61

39 139 34 154 6 46 76 105

171 62 131 161 142 125 176 74 99 15

5 83 108 38 70 124 145 30 25

182 159 20 164 75 91 122 132 146 126

88 52 42 177 111

92 64 141 24 47 106 166 12

16 13 180 118 134 79 3 21 94 157

1 35 9 32 18

57 93 133 127 143

136 53 104 60 67

103 78 4 86

68 40 27 167 110 179 158

22 184 54 26 109 137

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